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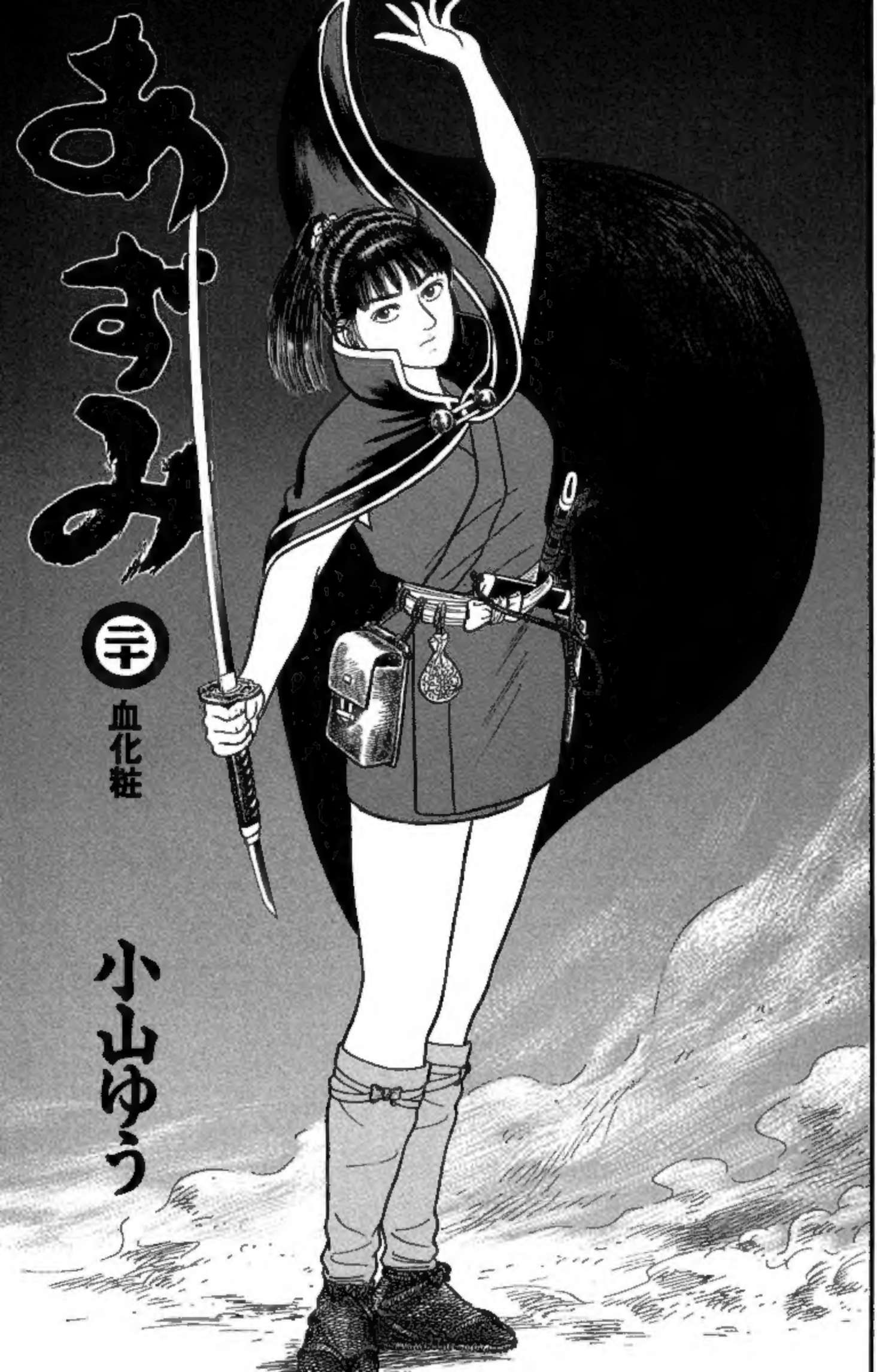
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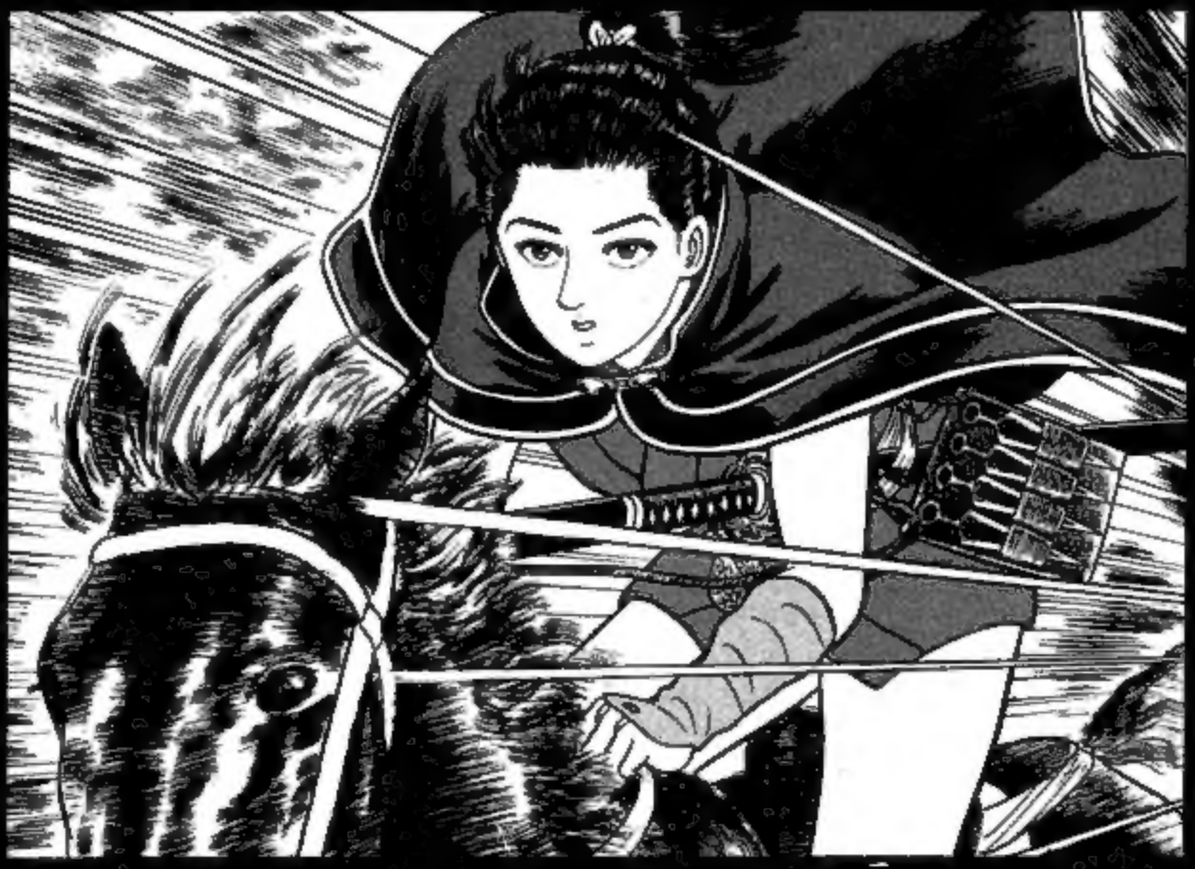

Azumi

20. Blood Makeup

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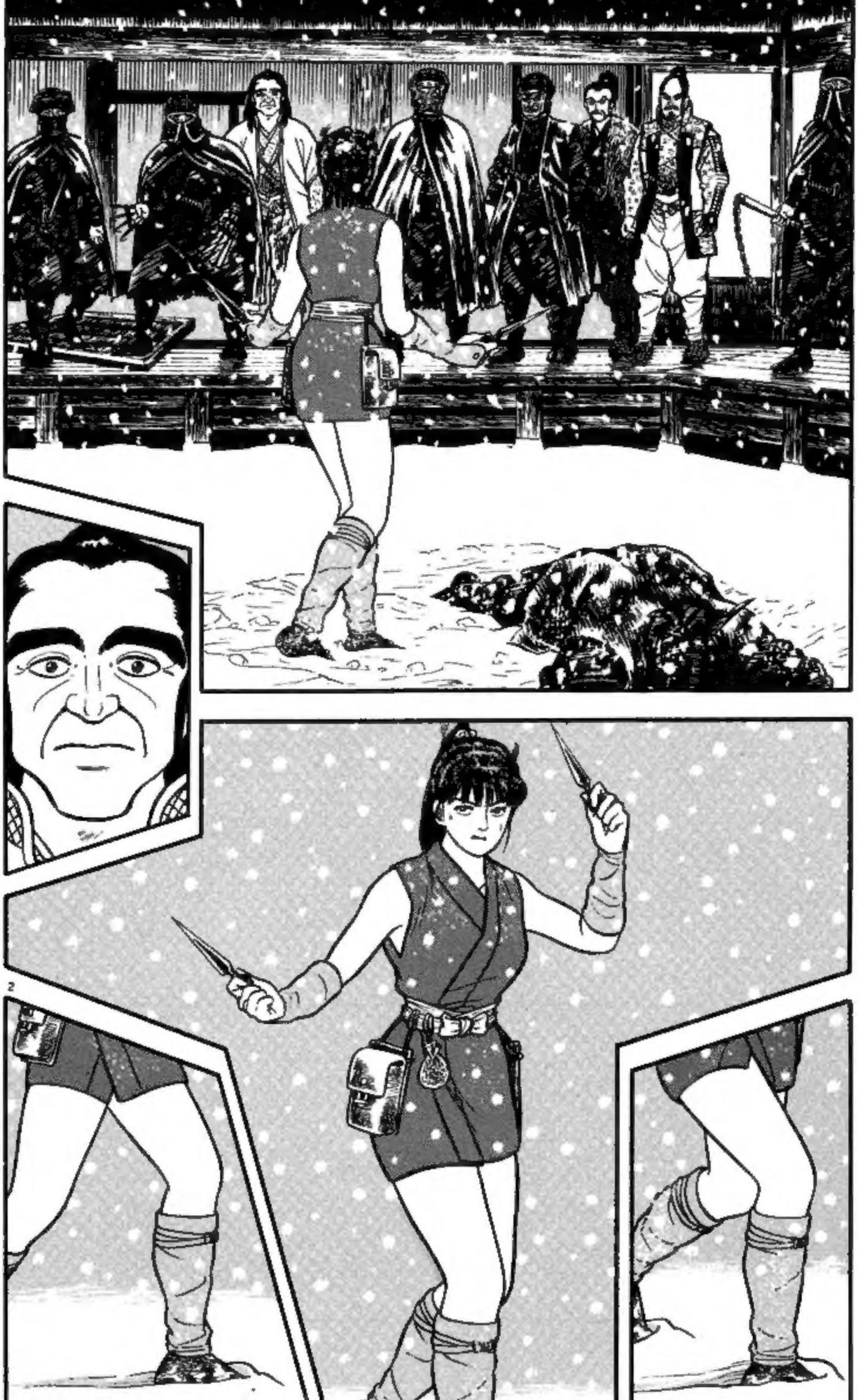
Chapter 1: Hopes and Dreams



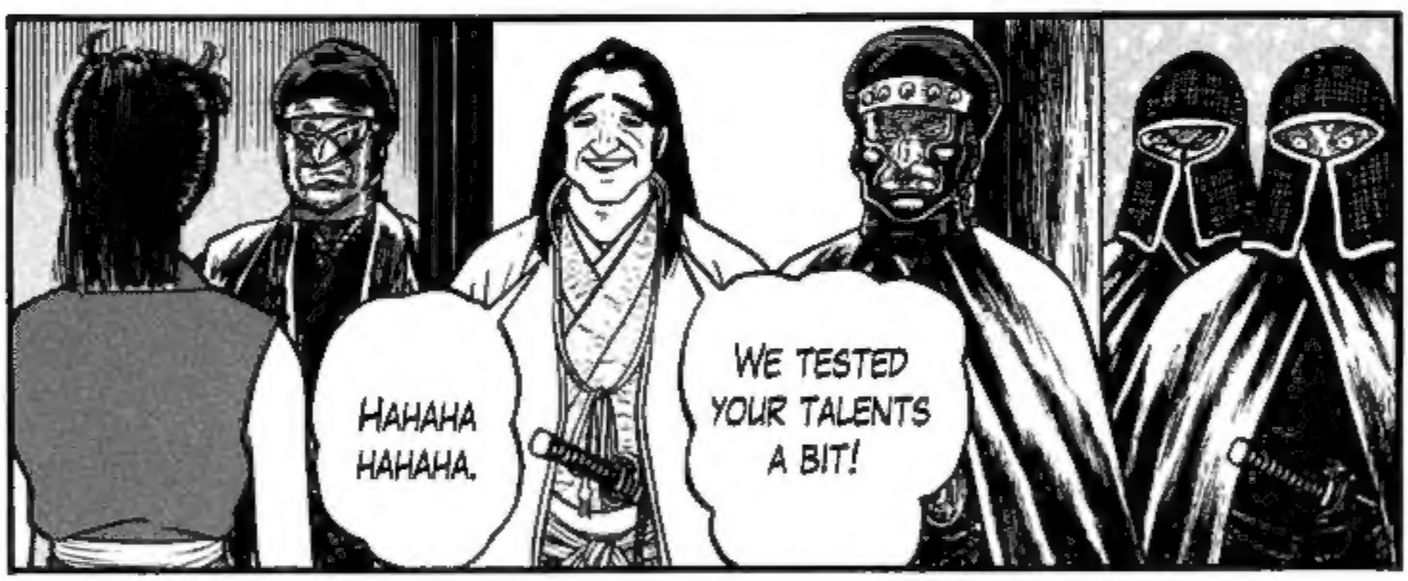
ARE YOU THIS GIRL?
WE HEARD THE RUMORS OF A YOUNG MAIDEN NAMED AZUMI WHO SINGLEHANDEDLY ANNIHILATED THE BANDITS WHO WERE OCCUPYING A POST TOWN...

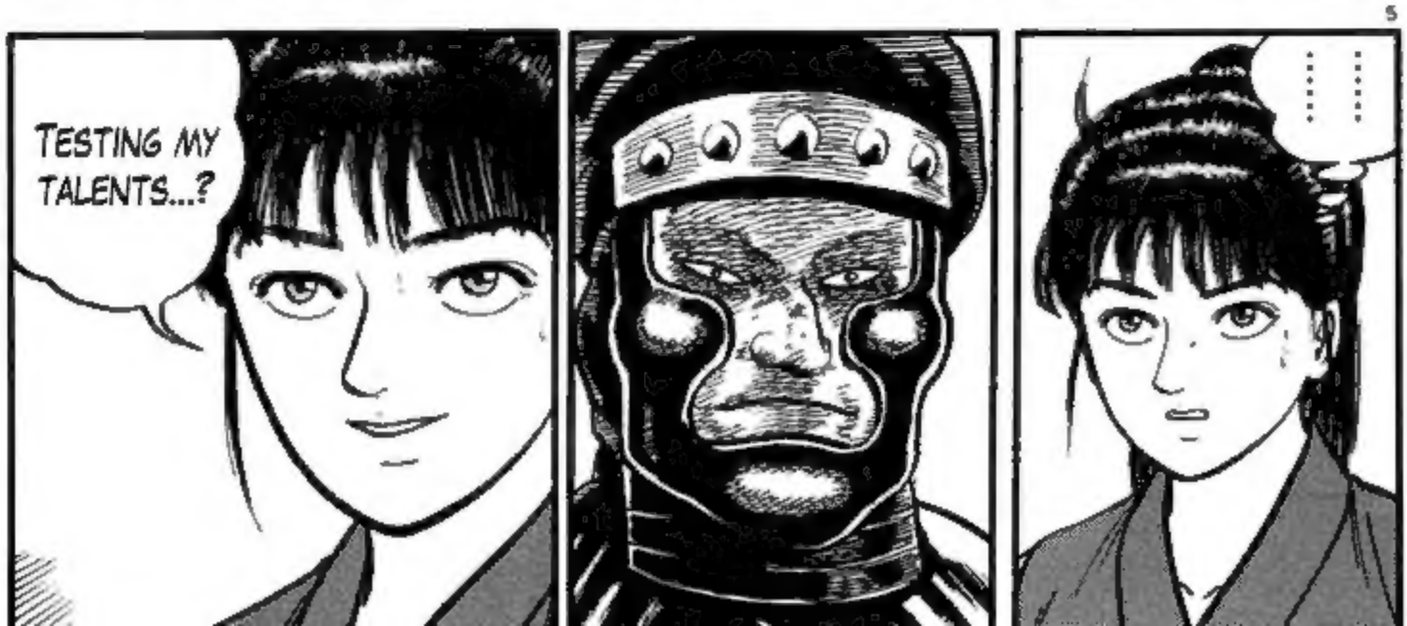
.....

IT WOULD APPEAR SO...

I CAME HERE WITH THE ORDER TO...HELP TO SAVE THIS FIEF SO YOU COULD ALL LIVE IN PEACE!
MUST BE A MISUNDER-STANDING, RIGHT?!
THE REASON YOU JUST TRIED TO KILL ME

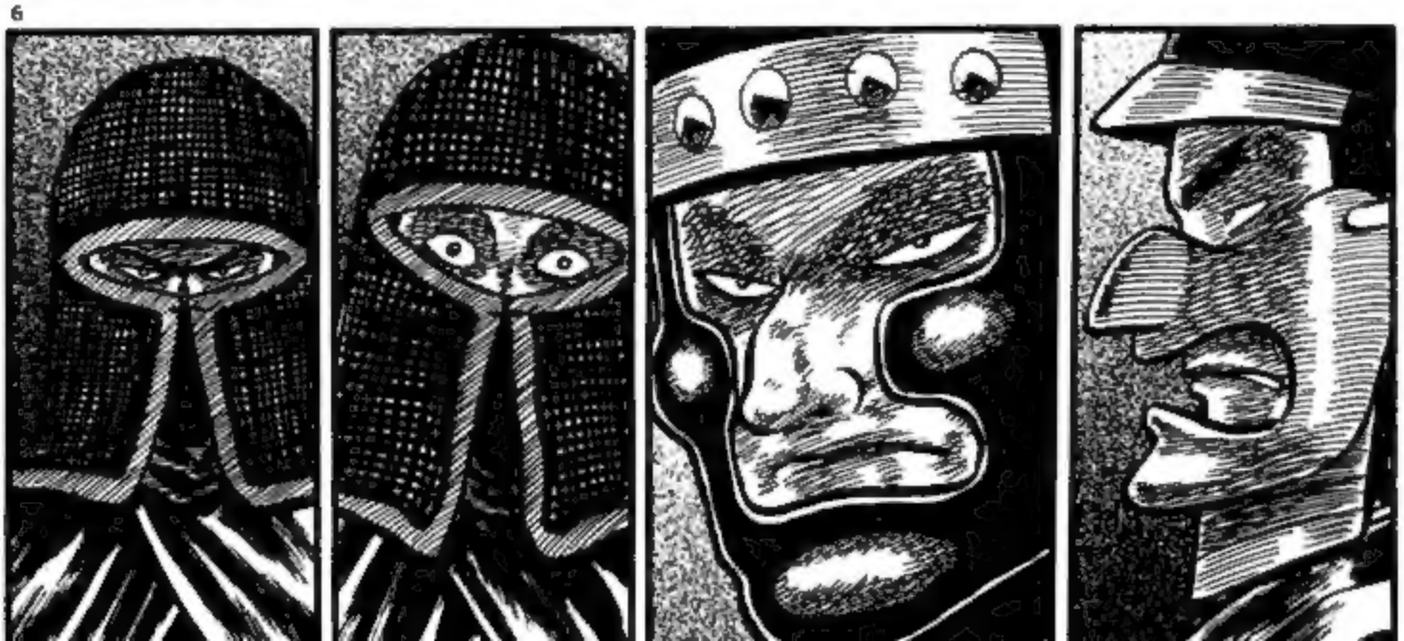
SO, AFTER I HEARD THAT RUMOR FROM THESE FELLOWS
HAHAHA...AZUMI, YOU DECEIVED US QUITE WELL WITH THAT PRINCESS STORY.


HAHAHA HAHAHA.
WE TESTED YOUR TALENTS A BIT!


TESTING MY TALENTS...?
.....

THERE WAS NO NEED TO KILL HIM.
IF YOU SAID THAT FROM THE START

SO SORRY ABOUT THAT!
HAHAH. YOU ARE QUITE RIGHT!



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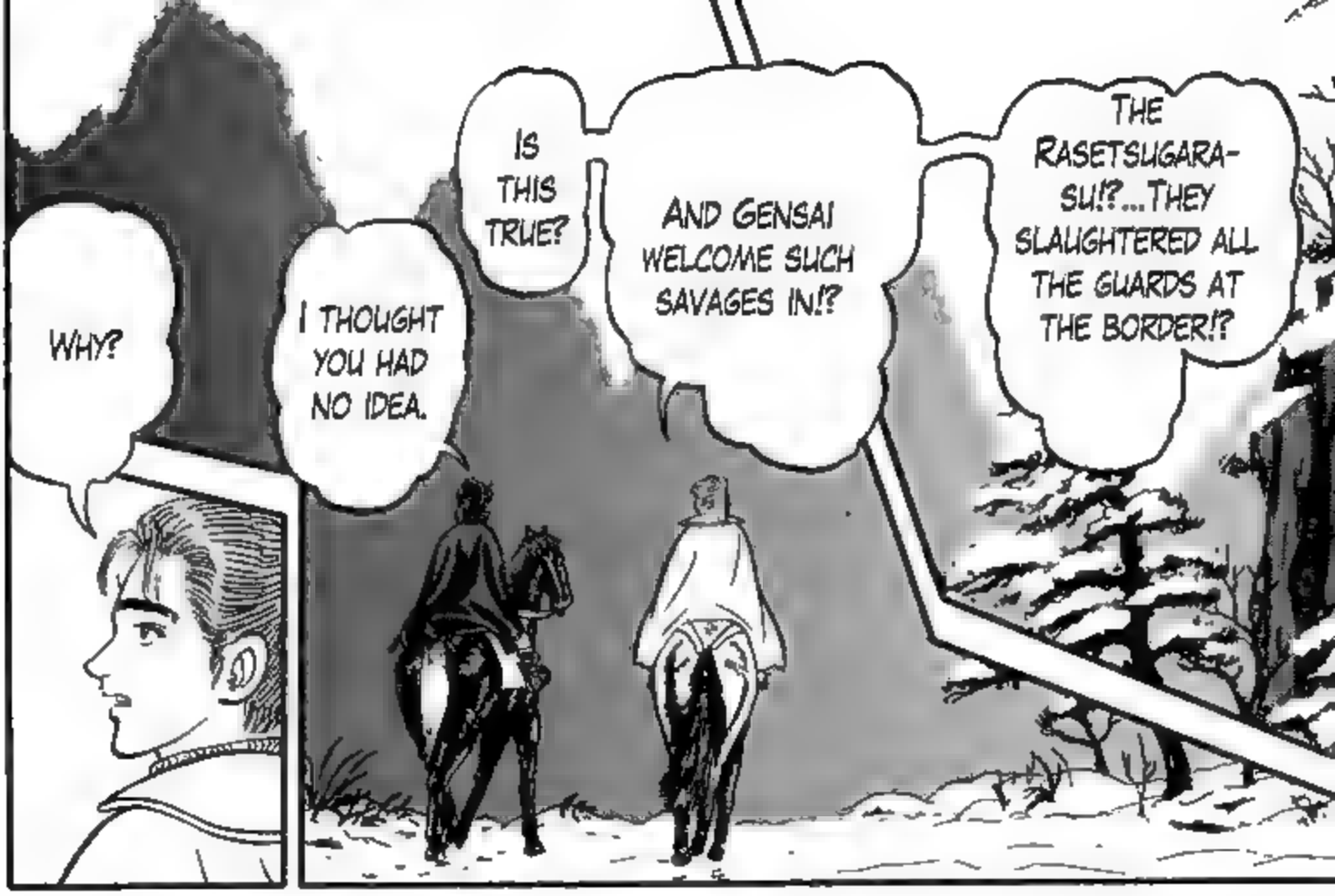
I'VE NEVER FELT LIKE THIS...WHY DO I FEEL LIKE I'M ALMOST FROZEN WITH FEAR...?
……

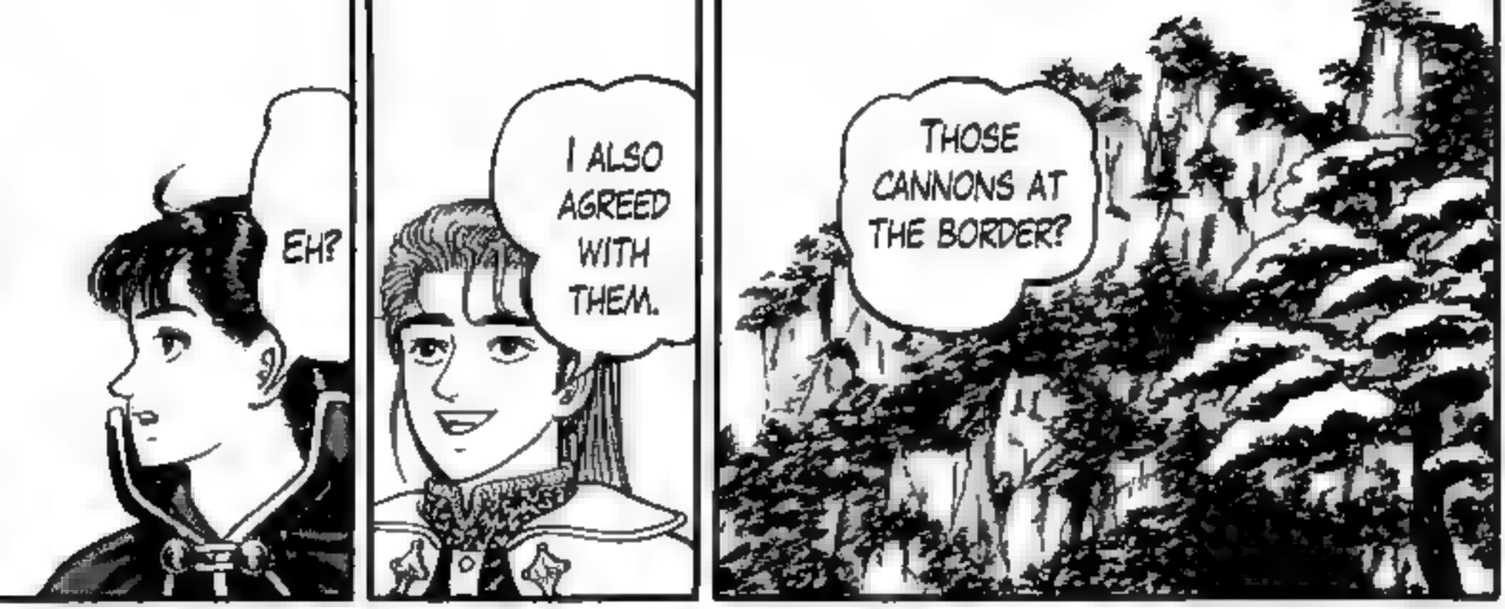
EVEN THOUGH I SHOULD ALWAYS PREPARE TO BE SLAIN...
AZUMI...YOU SHALL LOSE YOUR LIFE IN THESE LANDS...IN A BRUTAL MANNER!
WHAT'S HAPPENED TO ME?

DID YOU COME HERE TO CROSS IT?
MORE OR LESS.
ARE THERE FIXED TIMES WHEN YOU CROSS THAT?!
THERE WAS A MAN WAITING FOR YOU WITH YOUR HORSE.

I SEE.
.....
I GUESS I'VE FOUND YOU AT THE RIGHT TIME.
YES...WELL, I CAME HERE BECAUSE I WANTED TO ASK YOU A LOT...


THE RASETSUGARA-SU!?...THEY SLAUGHTERED ALL THE GUARDS AT THE BORDER!?
AND GENSAI WELCOME SUCH SAVAGES IN!?
IS THIS TRUE?
I THOUGHT YOU HAD NO IDEA.
WHY?

GENSAI...AND ALL THE OTHERS AS WELL... THEY ALL SUPORT SHUNJIRŌ'S IDEAL OF A NEW COUNTRY NEVER BEFORE SEEN IN THE HISTORY OF THE WORLD.
AND NOW THEY ARE WORKING STEADILY TOWARDS ITS REALIZATION.
WHY DID THEY WELCOME SUCH VIOLENT BEASTS?
SO THE ONE BEHIND IT IS SHUNJIRŌ-DONO...


EH?
I ALSO AGREED WITH THEM.
THOSE CANNONS AT THE BORDER?

IT WAS THAT ZEAL WHICH BUILT THE CANN-ONS.
SHUNJIRŌ AND KARASUMA TENZAN-SAN BOTH HAVE SUCH EXTENSIVE KNOWLEDGE AND STUDY WITH SUCH ZEAL!
NOW THAT I THINK ON IT...WHEN THEY ARRIVED HERE
WAS THEN THAT THE REVOLUTION BEGAN...
.....

TENZAN-DONO COLLAPSED FROM OVERWORK...HE'S NOW IN A SANITORIUM.
EVEN THE BUILDING OF THE CANNONS WAS DONE BY SHUNJI-RŌ-DONO AND TENZAN-DONO...

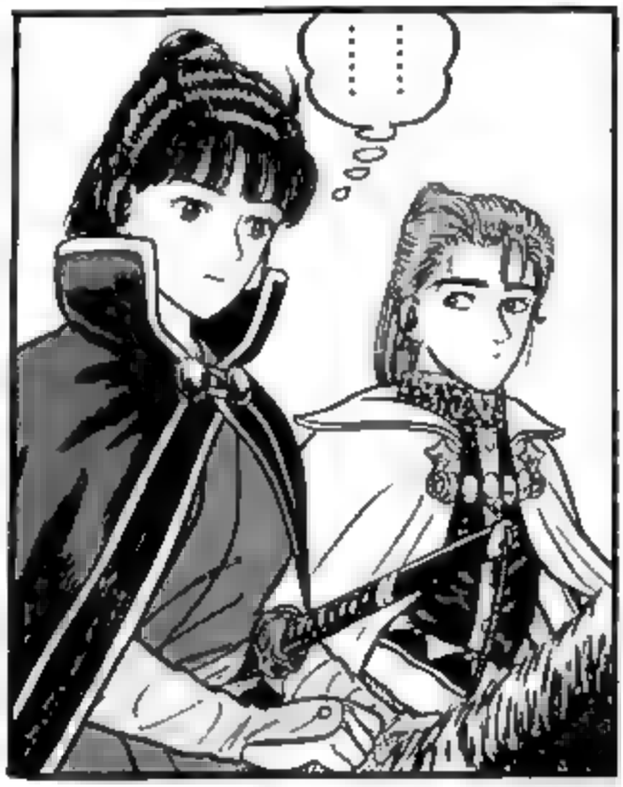
THE FARMERS WILL NEVER WANT FOR WORK, EVEN DURING THE SNOWFALL.
AFTER KARASUMA TENZAN-SAN AND SHUN-JIRŌ-DONO CAME
MINING FOR GOLD AND IRON ORE INCREASES INDUSTRY.

THEY GREW WEALTHY... AND ALL WERE JOYOUS...
THEY BUILT A TOWN LIKE THIS...
RIGHT BY THE GOLD MINE...

SHUNJIRŌ-DONO HAS STEADILY AND QUICKLY KEPT TO ADVANCING THE DREAM HE TOLD ME OF BACK THEN...
THE INDUSTRY WILL GROW AND SPREAD! DOING THAT WILL INCREASE THE COUNTRY'S WEALTH!
OOG

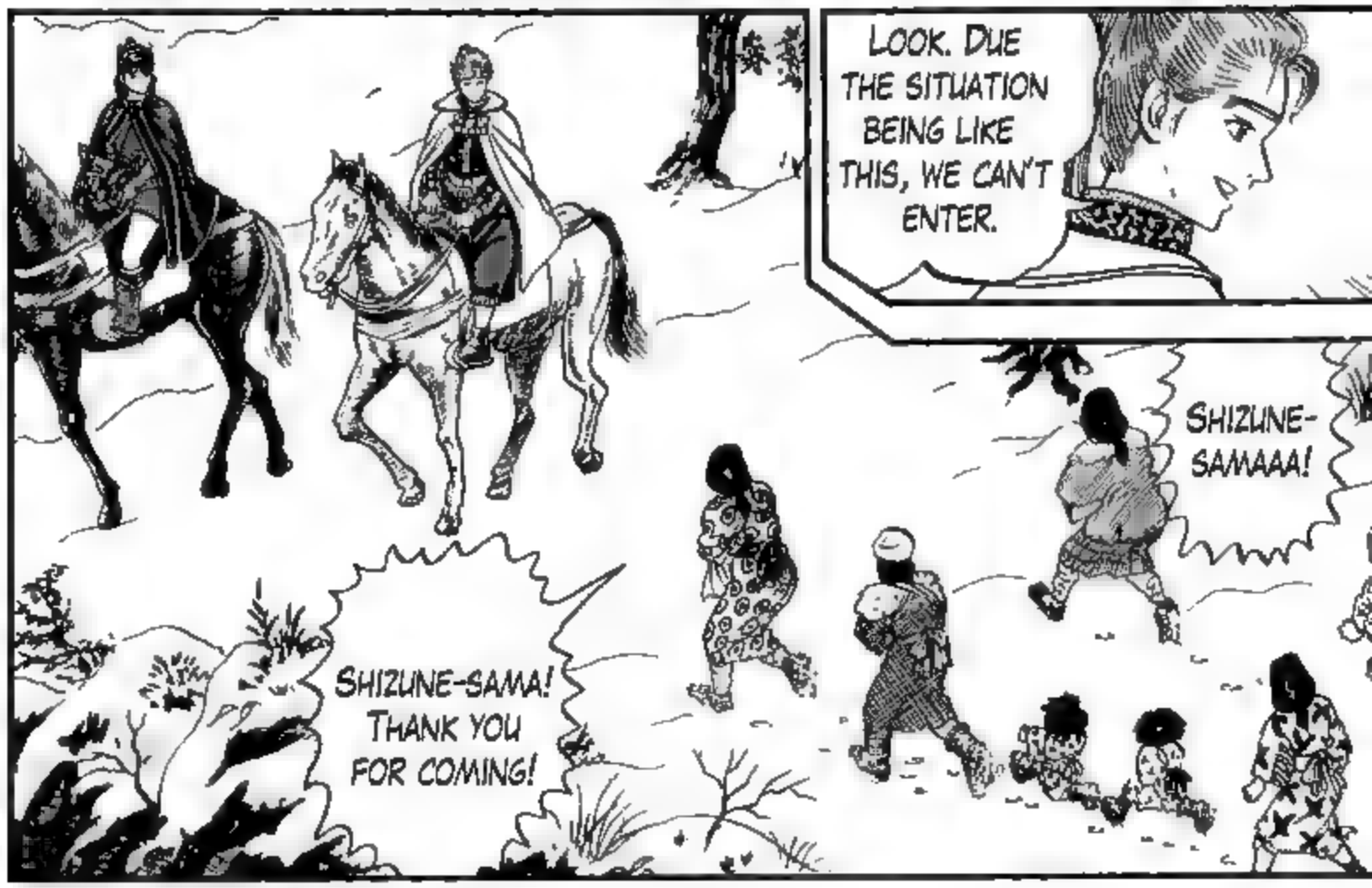
ARE THE CANNONS AND RIFLES MADE SOMEWHERE AROUND HERE?

I WONDER, I'VE NEVER LOOKED INTO THAT.



EVERYONE WORKS IN SUCH A DEDICATED FASHION. IT'S TRUE THEY'VE BECOME WEALTHIER THAN BEFORE.

AHH!
SHIZUNE-SAMA HAS COME TO GRACE US WITH A VISIT!!!
AHHH! IT'S SHIZU-NE-SAMA!


LOOK. DUE THE SITUATION BEING LIKE THIS, WE CAN'T ENTER.
SHIZUNE-SAMAAA!
SHIZUNE-SAMA! THANK YOU FOR COMING!

NO, I CANNOT TAKE ANY TIME FOR LEISURE. I MUST BE SOME-WHERE NOW.
BY ALL MEANS, PLEASE MAKE YOURSELF AT HOME!

WE'LL ALWAYS PRAAAAAY!
SHIZU-NE-SA-MAAAA!
THANK YOU SO MUCH!

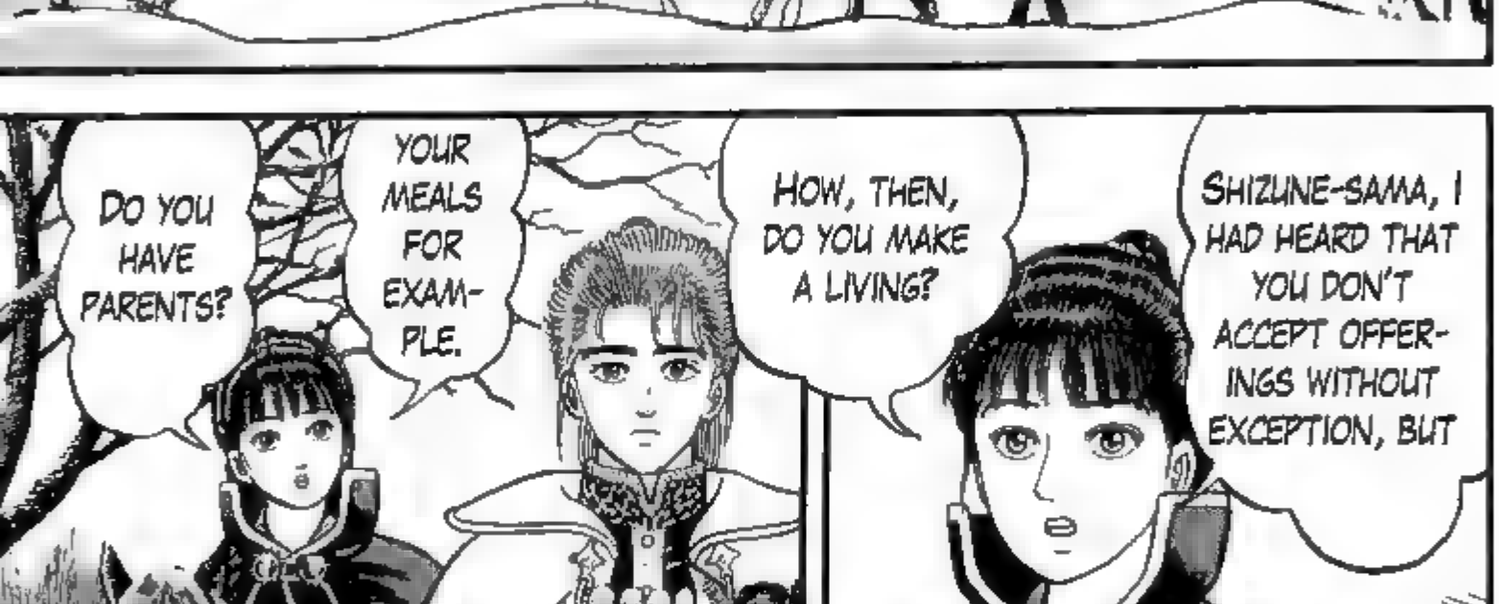
SHIZU-NE-SAMA!

IT'S ONLY A PLAIN LUNCH, BUT I POURED IN ALL OF MY FEELINGS TO THIS!
THIS IS TO THANK YOU!
PLEASE HELP YOUR-SELF!
THAT MY HEART HAS BEEN SAVED FROM SUFFERING IS THANKS TO YOU!
BUT,
I KNOW SHIZUNE-SAMA NEEDS NOTHING IN RETURN!

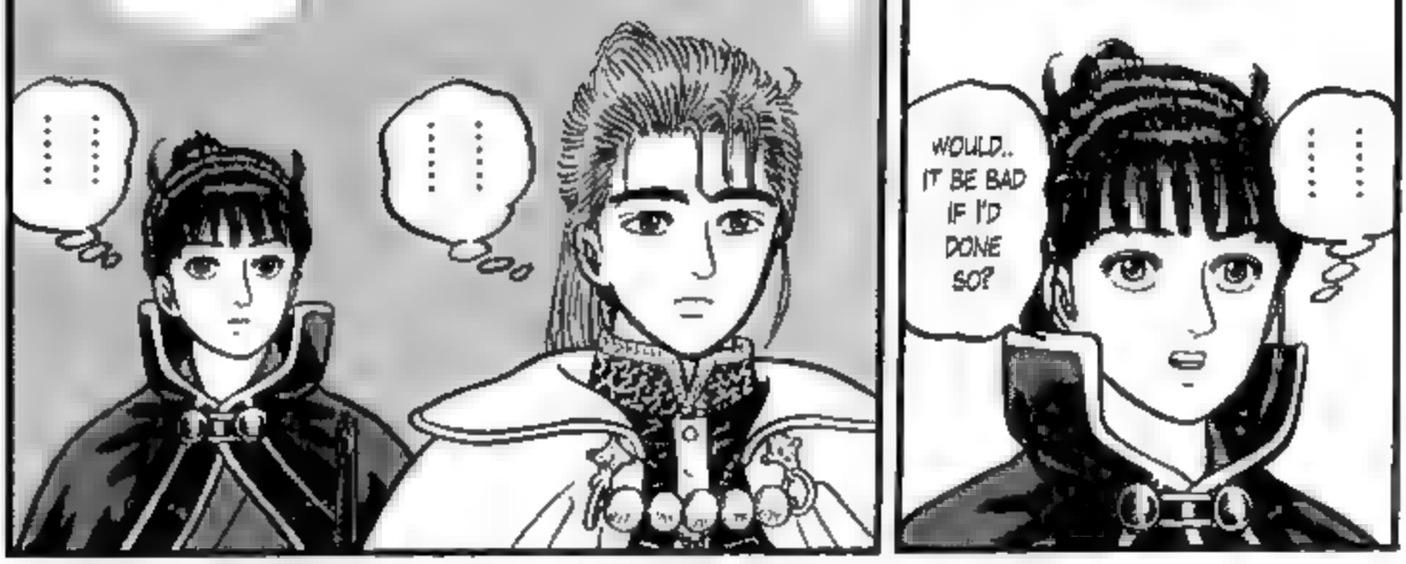
THERE IS NO NEED TO GIVE ME ANYTHING. I CANNOT ACCEPT ANYTHING.
TO PRAY TO GOD.
THANK YOU. I'M FINE IF YOU USE THOSE FEELINGS

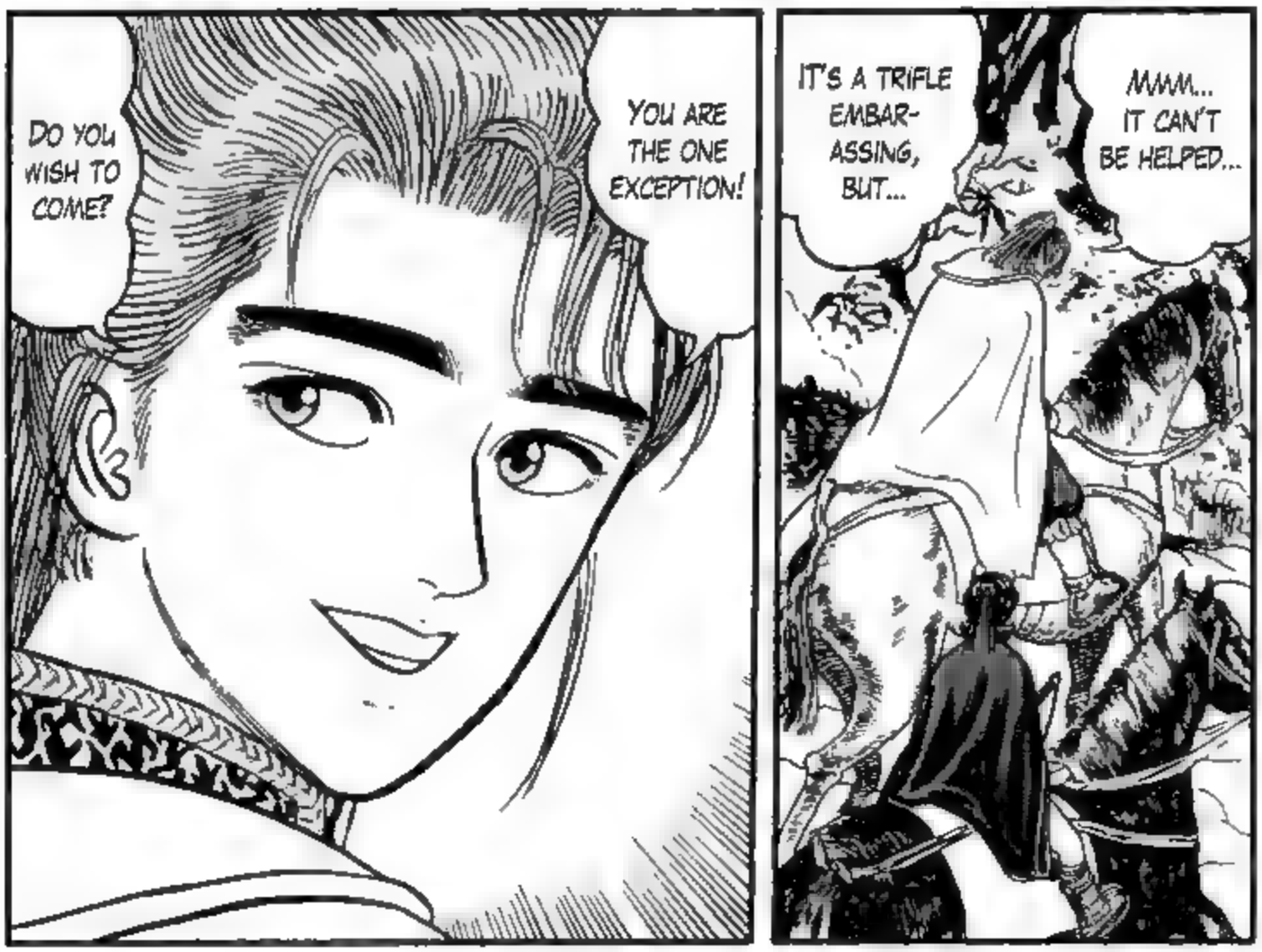
I AM SURE HE HAS GRANTED YOU HIS DIVINE PROTECTION.
GOD WATCHES OVER YOU.
UNDERSTAND? JUST LIKE FEELINGS ARE ENOUGH FOR ME.

.....


DO YOU HAVE PARENTS?
YOUR MEALS FOR EXAM-PLE.
HOW, THEN, DO YOU MAKE A LIVING?
SHIZUNE-SAMA, I HAD HEARD THAT YOU DON'T ACCEPT OFFER-INGS WITHOUT EXCEPTION, BUT

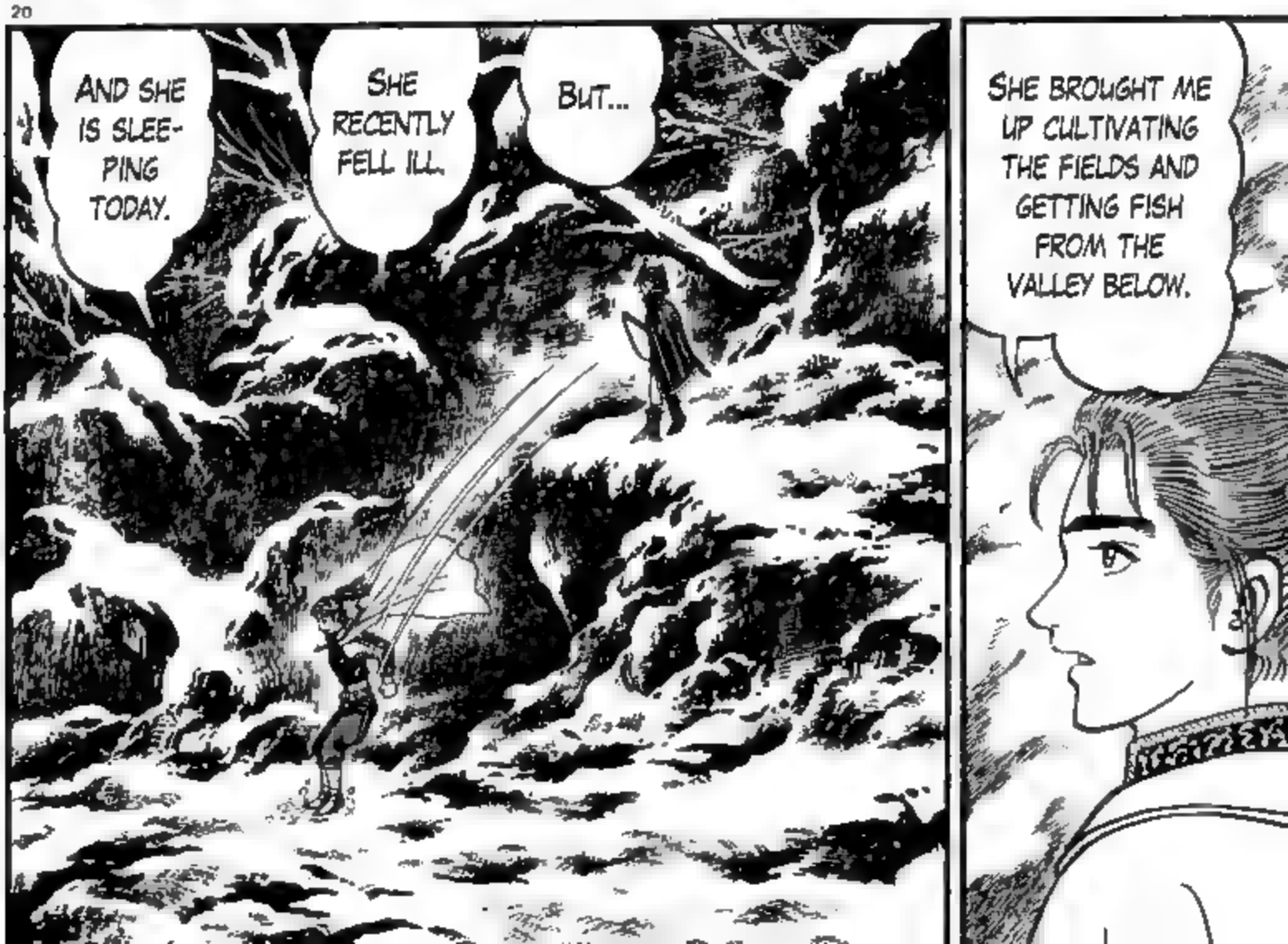
YOU WERE ALMOST TRYING TO DO IT TODAY...
YOU'RE THE ONLY ONE WHO CAN CROSS THAT BRIDGE.
THAT IS RIGHT ...
?


……
……
WOULD.. IT BE BAD IF I'D DONE SO?
……


DO YOU WISH TO COME?
YOU ARE THE ONE EXCEPTION!
IT'S A TRIFLE EMBAR-ASSING, BUT...
MMM... IT CAN'T BE HELPED...

CAN I!?
……

I HAVE NO PAR-ENTS.
I WAS RAISED BY A WET-NURSE.
OH!?
DO YOU LIVE TOG-ETHER!?

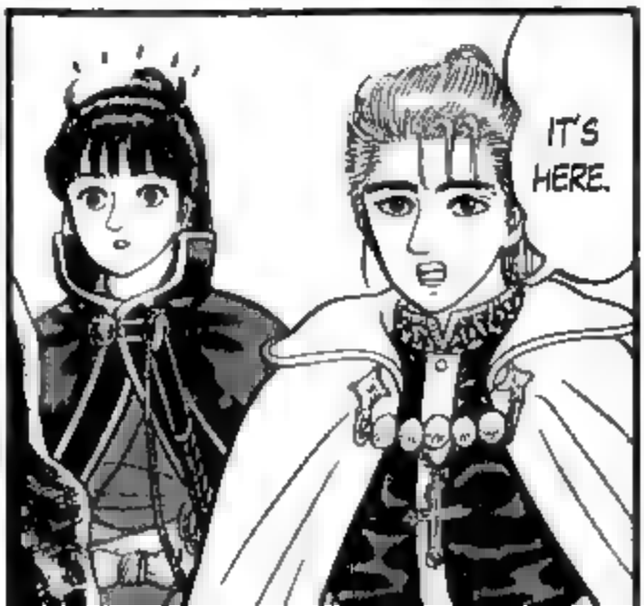

AND SHE IS SLEE-PING TODAY.
SHE RECENTLY FELL ILL.
BUT...
SHE BROUGHT ME UP CULTIVATING THE FIELDS AND GETTING FISH FROM THE VALLEY BELOW.

.....
THEN ...
WHAT DO YOU DO FOR FOOD AND OTHER THINGS?

.....
YES...
BUT...

IS IT NOT THE SAME FOR YOU?
OBVIOUSLY, I TAKE CARE OF ALL THAT MYSELF! WHATEVER ARE YOU ASKING?

I WISH TO PUT THINGS IN ORDER.
CAN YOU WAIT HERE FOR A BIT?


IT'S HERE.

HOW SURPR-ISING...

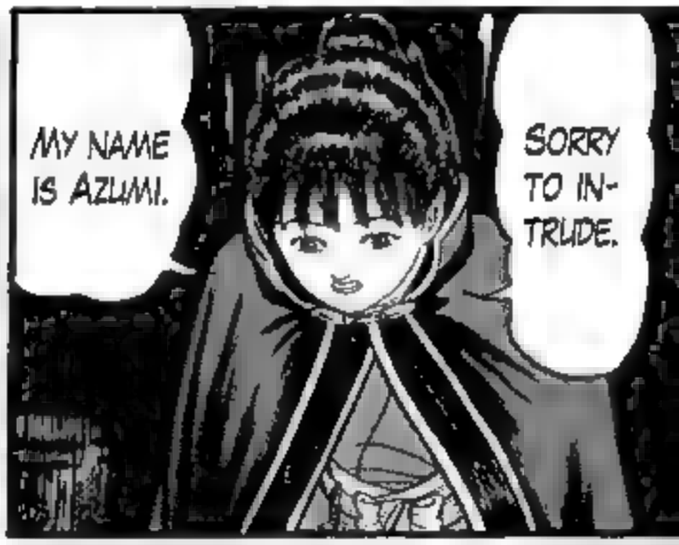
LIVES IN SUCH A SIMPLE HOUSE.
THAT SHIZUNE-SAMA SO ADORED BY HIS PEOPLE... WORSHIPPED AS THE SON OF GOD,

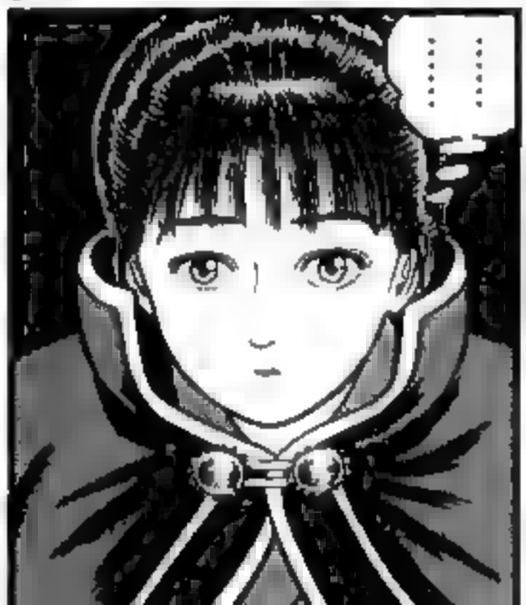
THERE ARE FIELDS.
IT'S TRUE.

COME ON IN!
IT'S FINE!

SO NOBODY KNOWS... HOW SHIZUNE-SAMA REALLY LIVES...
NOBODY CAN CROSS THAT BRIDGE TO COME HERE...

AHHH...


MY NAME IS AZUMI.
SORRY TO INTRUDE.


.....

WELCOME... COME IN...

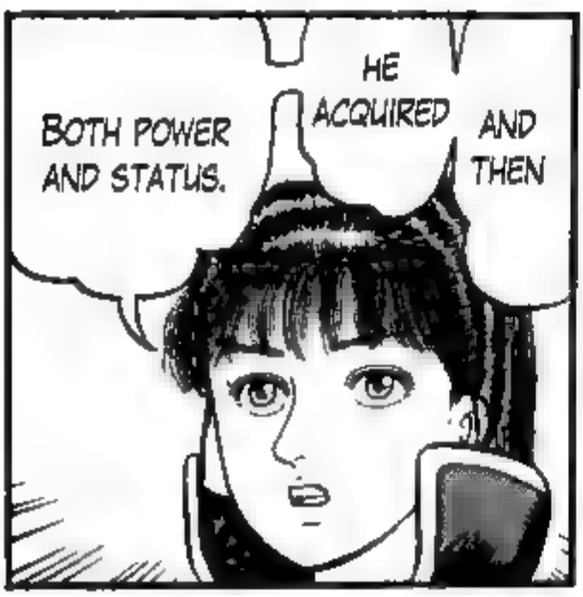
PAY ME NO MIND!
AH, HE'S RIGHT!
YOU'RE VERY ILL, SO PLEASE DON'T FEEL LIKE YOU HAVE TO DO ANYTHING!
THAT'S NO GOOD!

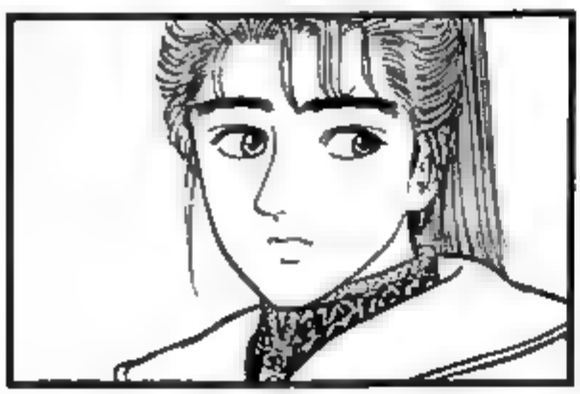
I CAN FIX YOU A SIMPLE MEAL RIGHT AWAY.
ARE YOU HUNGRY?

.....

PLEASE DON'T MIND ME!
NO, I'M ALRIGHT!

.....
ABOUT WHAT?
TO TELL YOU THE TRUTH, I'M SURPRISED.


BOTH POWER AND STATUS.
HE ACQUIRED AND THEN



AND HE'S SPLENDIDLY BRING IT TO FRUITION.
SHUNJIRŌ-DONO HAD THE GRAND DREAM OF WANTING TO ENRICH THE COUNTRY BY MAKING INDUSTRY EVEN GREATER

IF I LOOK AT YOU, SHIZUNE-SAMA...
ON THE OTHER HAND,

GENSAI-DONO AND THE OTHERS HAVE TAKEN POWER BY FORCE.

CONTRASTING YOUR IMPO-RTANCE TO THIS LAND,
YOU LIVE WITH SUCH A FRUGAL LIFESTYLE!
I WONDER
WHAT ARE
YOUR HOPES,
YOUR DREAMS,

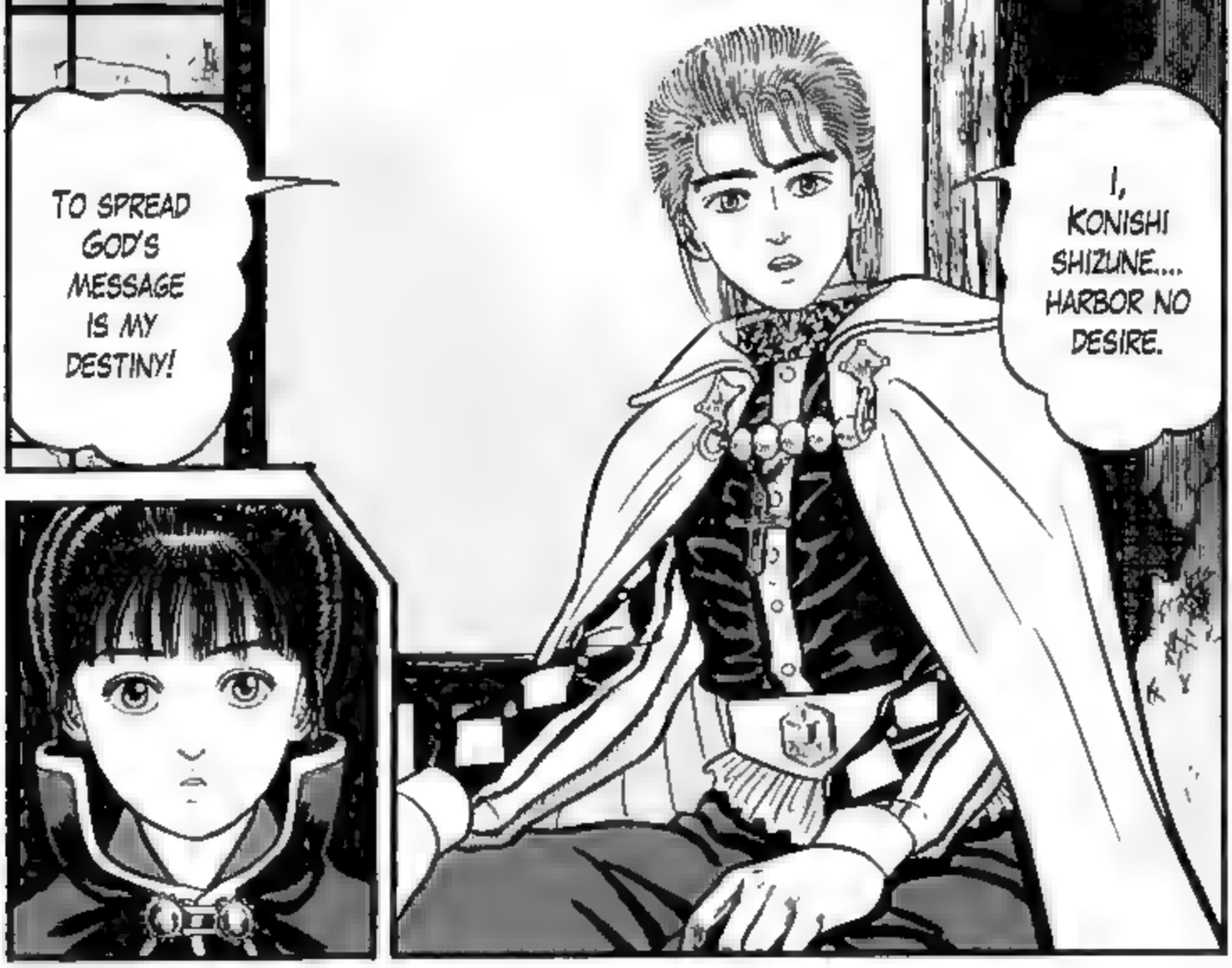
DREAMS,
HOPES,
.....
THINGS I WISH TO OBTAIN ...

THE THINGS YOU WANT TO OBTAIN!

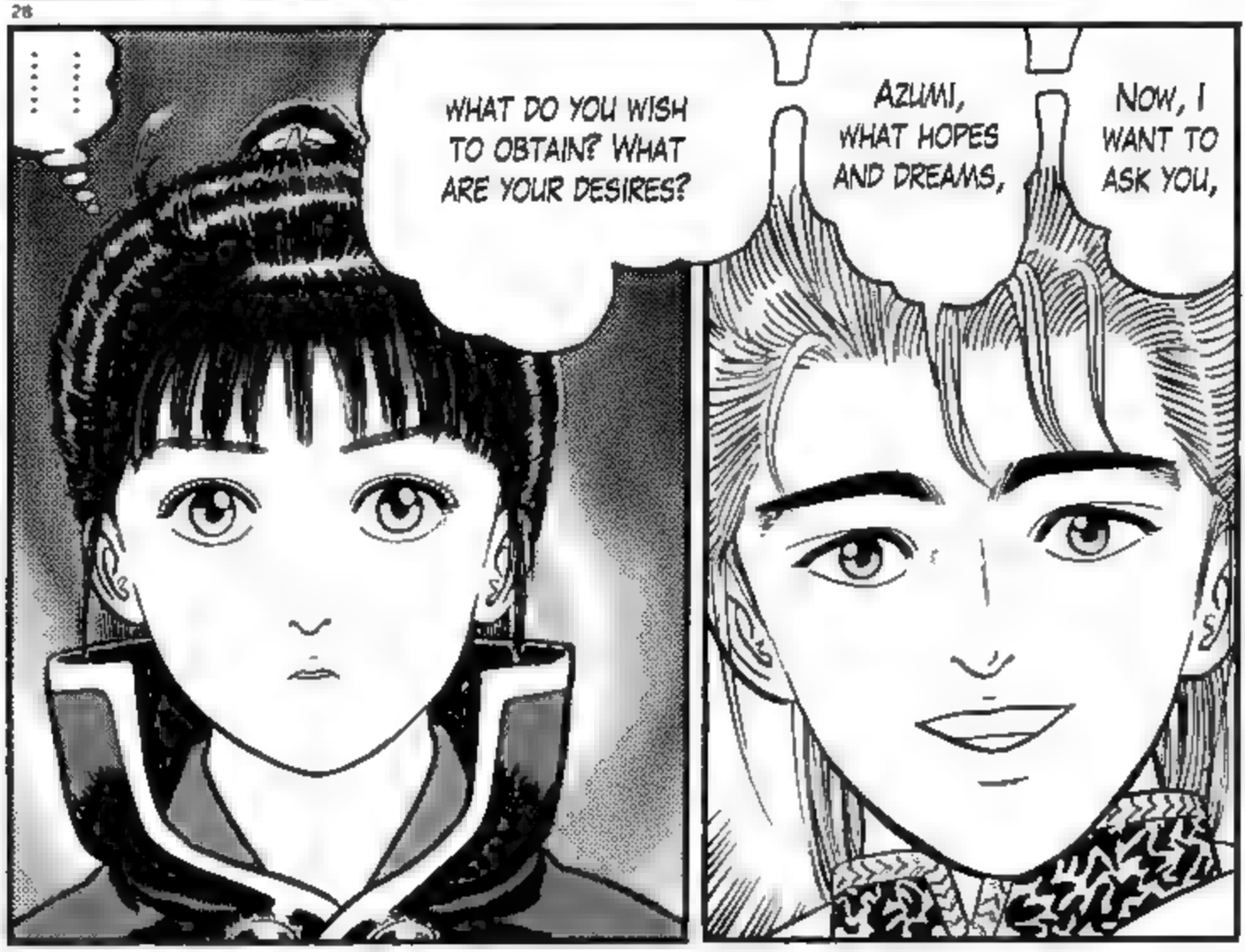
.....

YES!

WHAT DO I WANT?
MINE?


I, KONISHI SHIZUNE.... HARBOR NO DESIRE.
TO SPREAD GOD'S MESSAGE IS MY DESTINY!

28


NOW, I WANT TO ASK YOU,
AZUMI, WHAT HOPES AND DREAMS,
WHAT DO YOU WISH TO OBTAIN? WHAT ARE YOUR DESIRES?
.....

CHAPTER 2: A SPECIAL PERSON

.....
WHAT ON EARTH DID YOU WANT TO OBTAIN THAT YOU CAME IN THESE LANDS ON PURPOSE TO LOSE YOUR LIFE IN A BRUTAL WAY?
TELL ME.

.....

HM?

"EVERY PERSON...IS BORN TO CARRY OUT MISSIONS THAT ARE USEFUL FOR THE WORLD..."

2

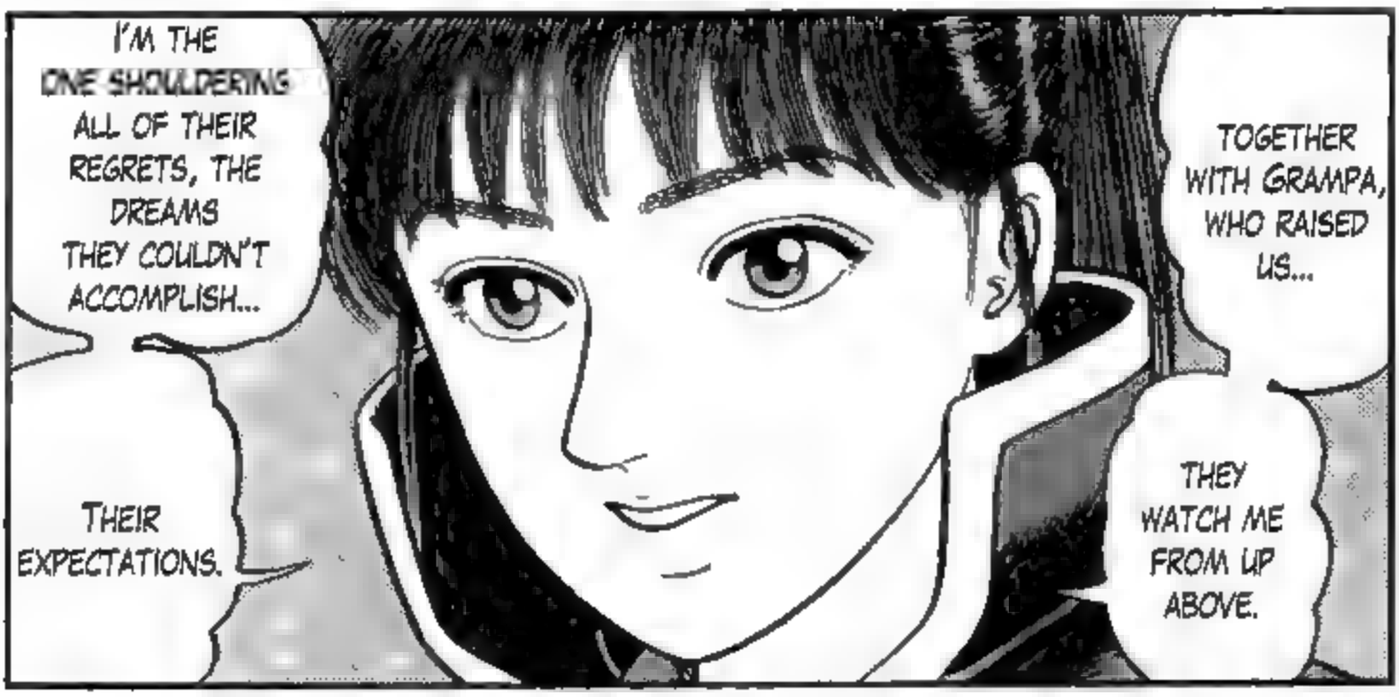
THERE ARE EVEN TIMES WHEN I DON'T KNOW...IF IT'S REALLY THE TRUTH...
NOW.

I GREW UP BEING TAUGHT THAT.

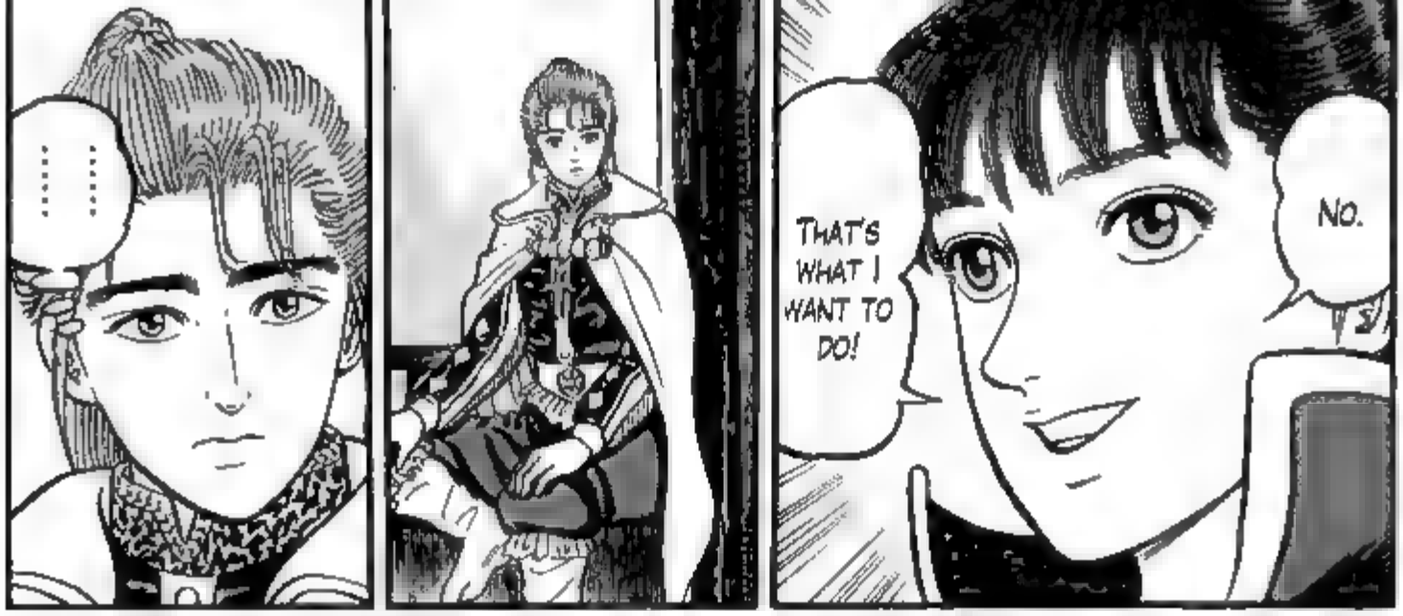
WE STRONGLY WISHED TO...QUICKLY GROW UP TO CARRY OUT MISSIONS AND BECOME USEFUL TO THE WORLD!!
HOWEVER, WE TEN COMRADES GREW UP RECEIVING TRAINING IN ORDER TO CARRY OUT MISSIONS...

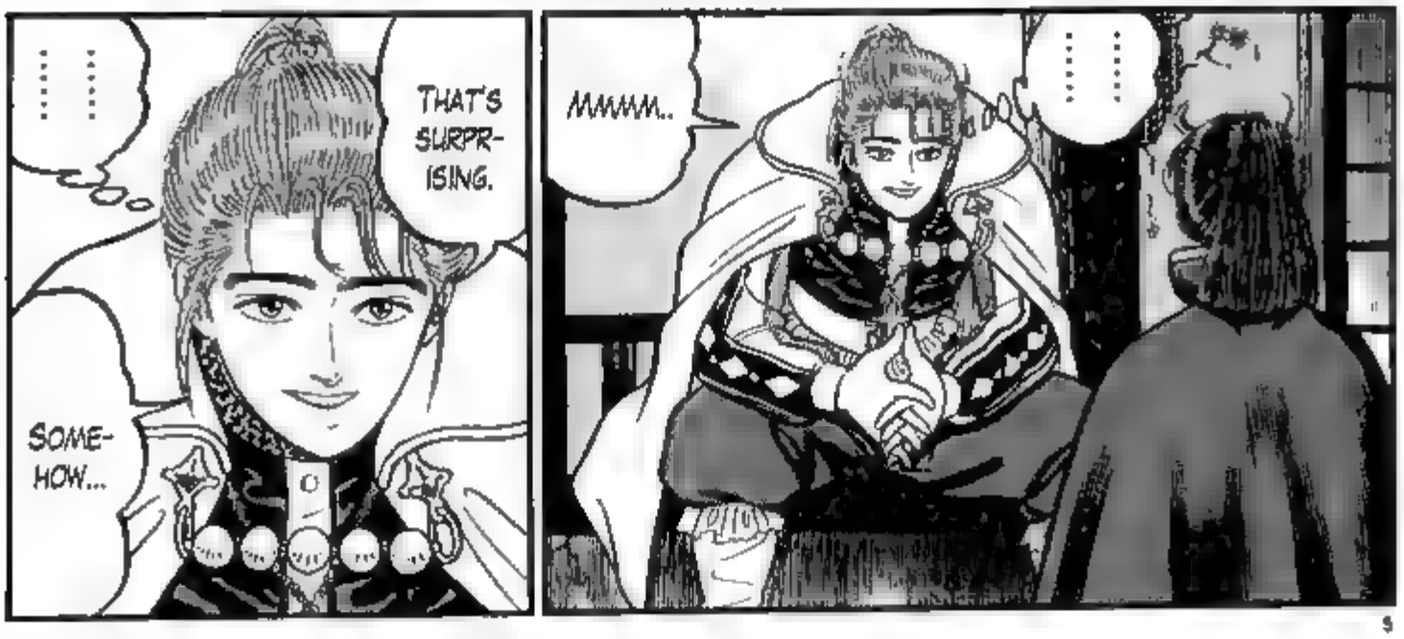
THEN ...
SOME OF THEM DIED WITHOUT CARRINYG OUT A
SINGLE MISSION... AND OTHERS...

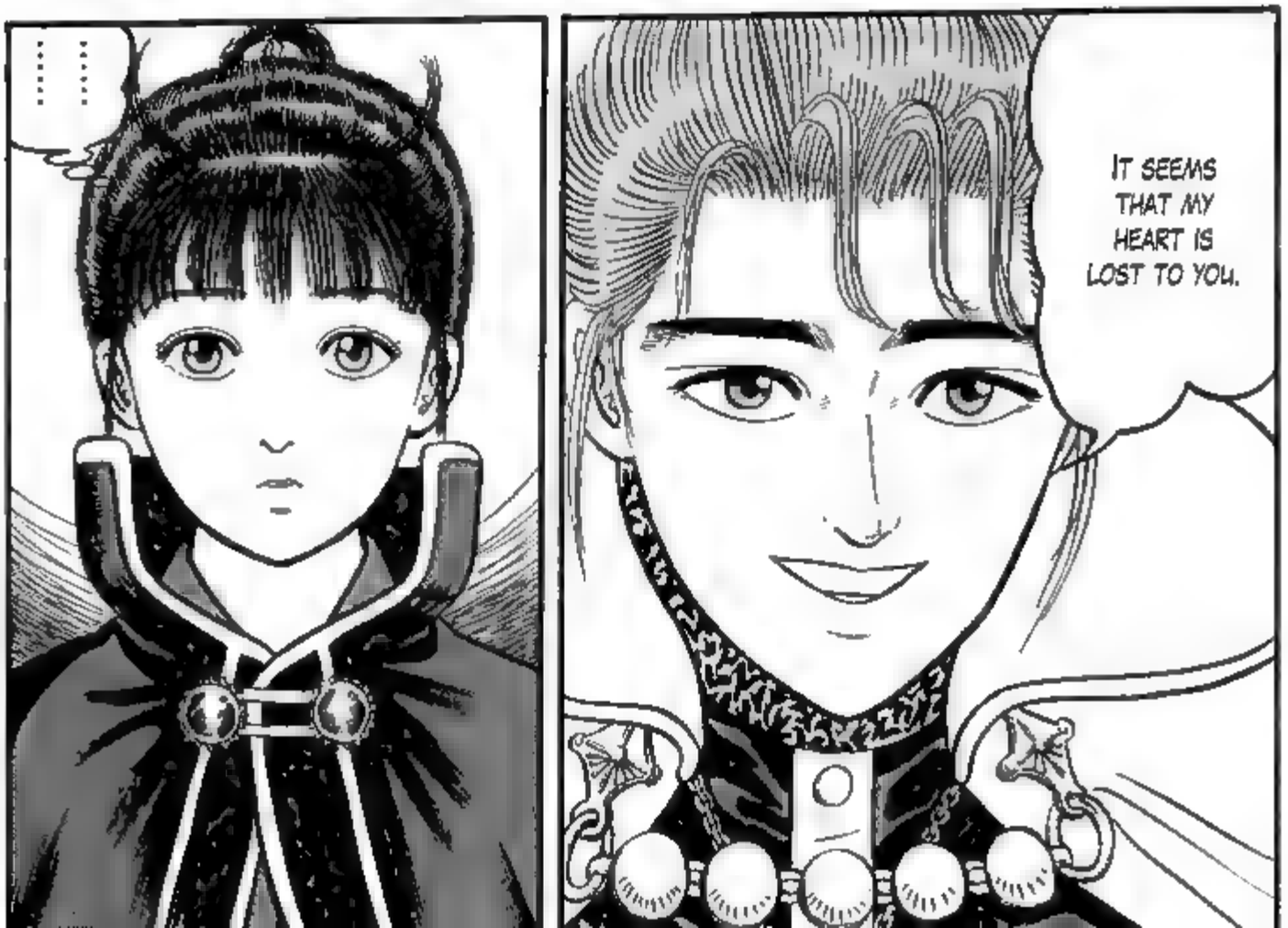
WHILE CARRYING THEM OUT.
ENDED UP DYING
I'M THE LAST ONE LEFT.


I'M THE ONE SHOULDERING ALL OF THEIR REGRETS, THE DREAMS THEY COULDN'T ACCOMPLISH...
THEIR EXPECTATIONS.
TOGETHER WITH GRAMPA, WHO RAISED US...
THEY WATCH ME FROM UP ABOVE.

CARRYING OUT IMPORTANT MISSIONS...
I HAVE TO GO ON...
EVEN FOR THEM


.....
No.
THAT'S WHAT I WANT TO DO!


.....
THAT'S SURPR-ISING.
SOME-HOW...
.....
MMMM..


.....
IT SEEMS THAT MY HEART IS LOST TO YOU.

AHHH! AZUMI-NEE-CHAN!
YOU CAME, GACCHI!

YOU'RE DRESSED FUNNY.
AND EVEN THOUGH YOU'RE A WOMAN YOU'RE WEARING A KATANA!
DO YOU PRACTICE SWORD-PLAY!?
ONLY A LITTLE.

BUT I'LL GIVE IT TO YOU!
IT'S ONE OF MY TREASURES!

I CAME TO BRING YOU A THANK-YOU GIFT FOR LAST NIGHT!
OHH?

OH, IT'S SHAPED LIKE A FROG!

HERE!

YOU CAN HAVE IT!

IS IT ALRIGHT? ISN'T IT YOUR TREASURE?

RIGHT!? ISN'T IT AMAZING!? IT'S A STONE THAT I FOUND!
IT REALLY LOOKS LIKE A FROG!
IT'S EVEN GOT EYES! HAHAHAHA!

THANK YOU!
THEN I SHALL ACCEPT IT!

YOU'RE A SPECIAL CASE, AZUMI-NEECHAN!

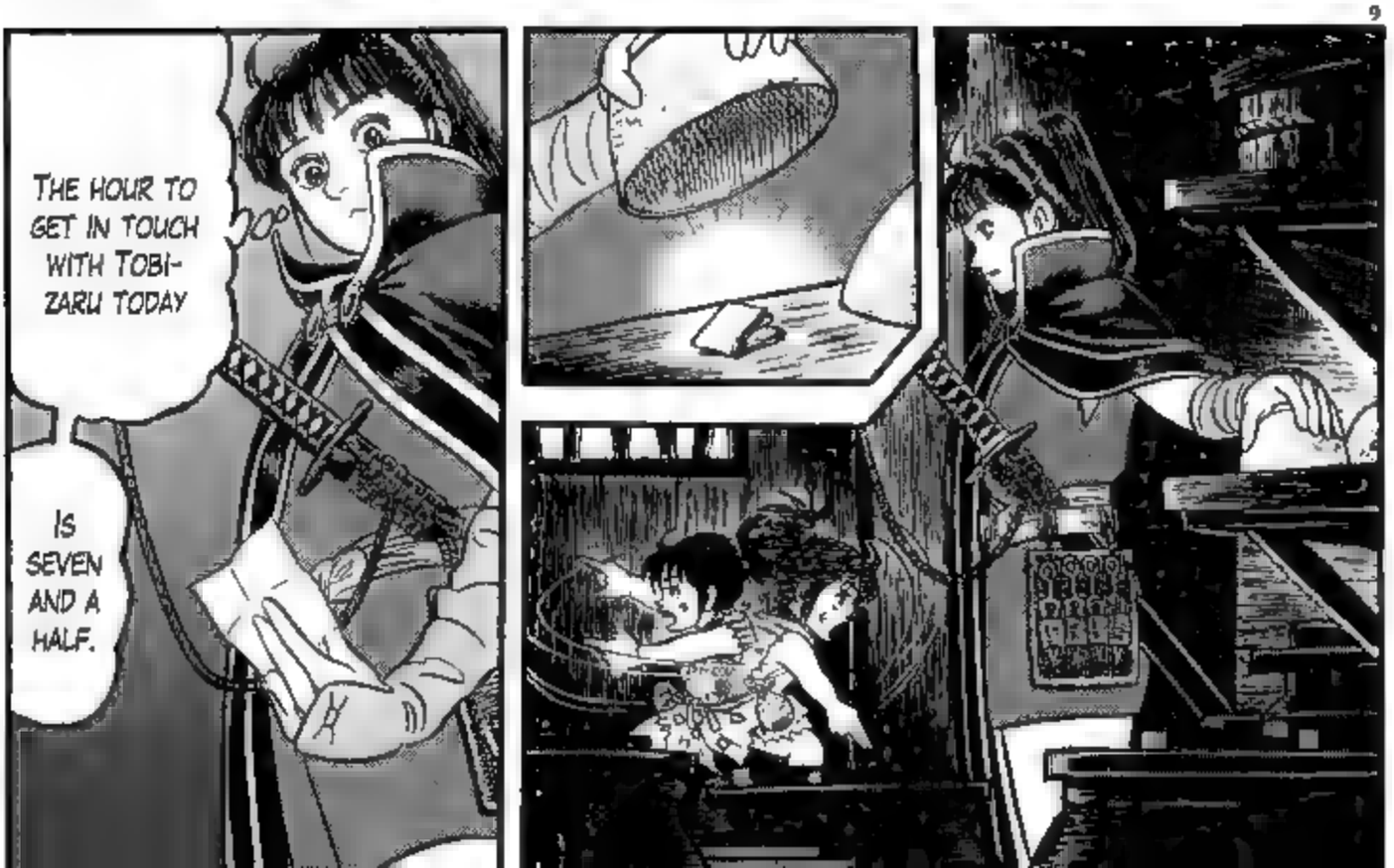
IF I DID THAT, WOULDN'T I JUST BE A BEGGAR?
YOU DON'T GET IT, HUH?
.....
DO YOU WANT SOME RICE TODAY AS WELL?

THAT'S NO GOOD, EITHER!
AND IF THE ONE YOU'VE STOLEN FROM NOTICES THAT IT'S MISSING?
IT'S BEST TO STEAL WITHOUT GETTING CAUGHT OR BEING NOTICED!

"I FEEL AS IF THIS HAS DECREASED A BIT!"
"HUH?"
YOU KNOW, I MAKE SURE TO NEVER STEAL A LOT FROM A SINGLE HOUSE!
THAT'S WHY THE PEOPLE GO
"IS IT PERHAPS MY IMAGINATION?"

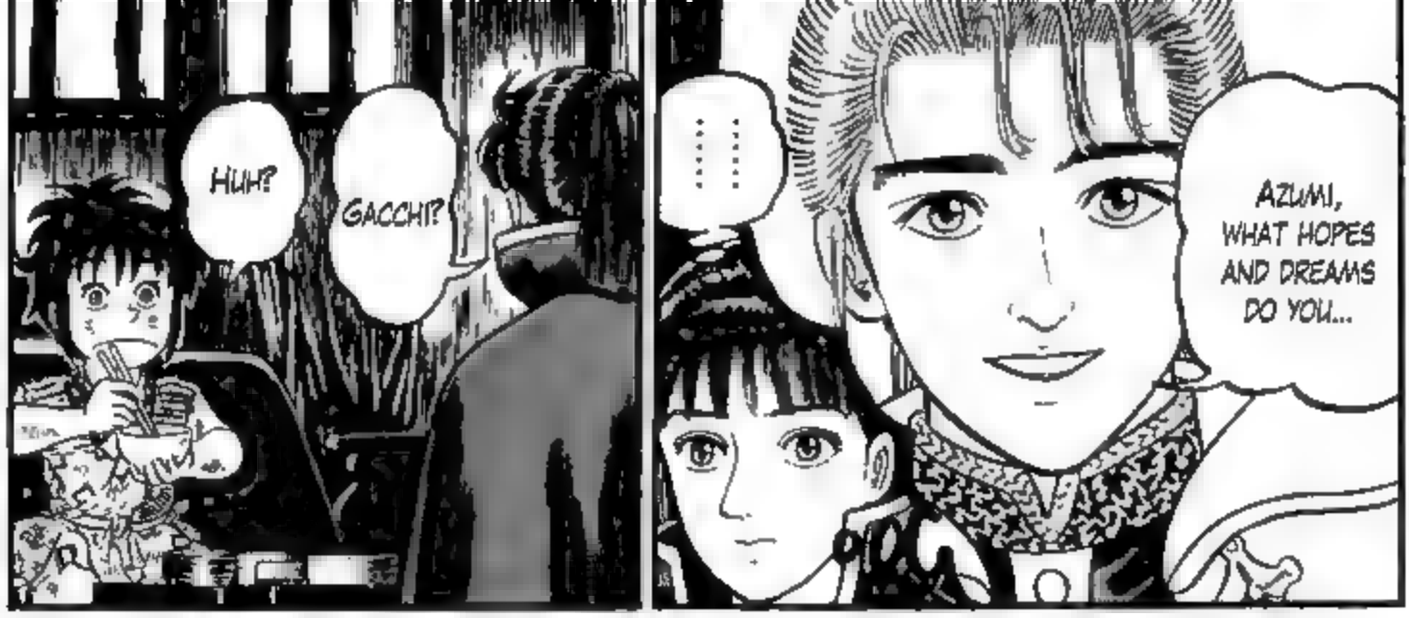
AND BY DOING THAT, I, MY FATHER AND MY LITTLE SIS CAN EAT AND NOT STARVE TO DEATH!
...AND BECAUSE THEY DON'T KNOW ABOUT IT, THEY DON'T EVEN FEEL ANNOYED...

.....
RIGHT?
SO, EEEEVERYTHING WORKS OUT, RIGHT!?
I SEE.

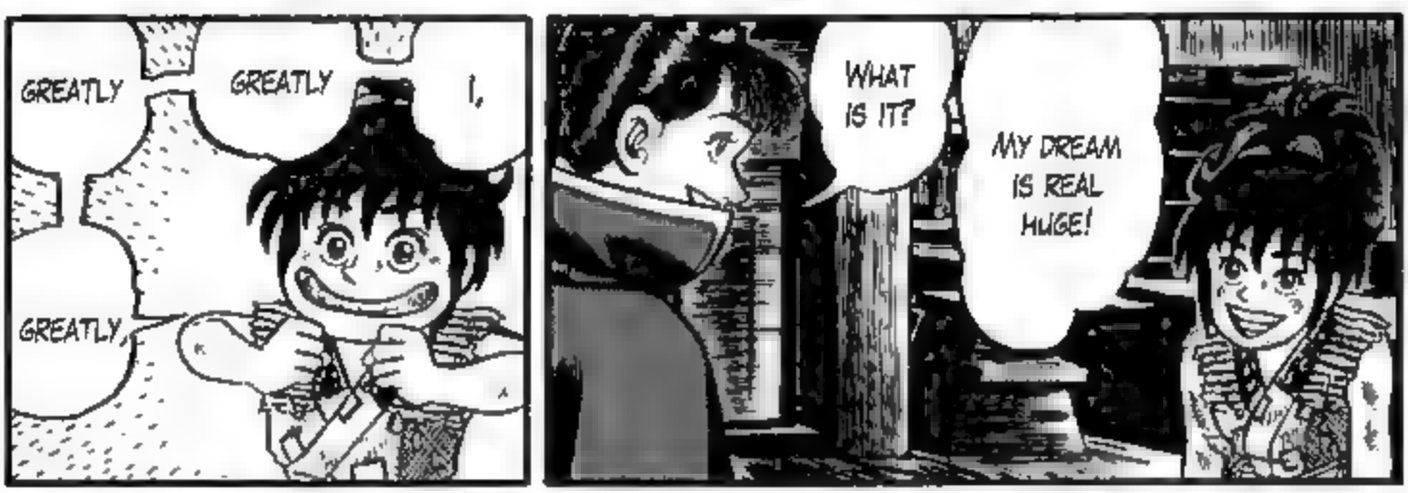

THE HOUR TO GET IN TOUCH WITH TOBI-ZARU TODAY
IS SEVEN AND A HALF.

IT'S OKAY WITH YOU!?
REALLY!?
GACCHI, SINCE I'M HAVING LUNCH, LET'S EAT T OGETHER!!
BLAHBLAHBLAH
CHOMPCHOMPCHOMP

TO SPREAD GOD'S MESSAGE IS MY DESTINY!
I, KONISHI SHIZUNE, HARBOR NO DESIRE.
HOPES? DREAMS ?

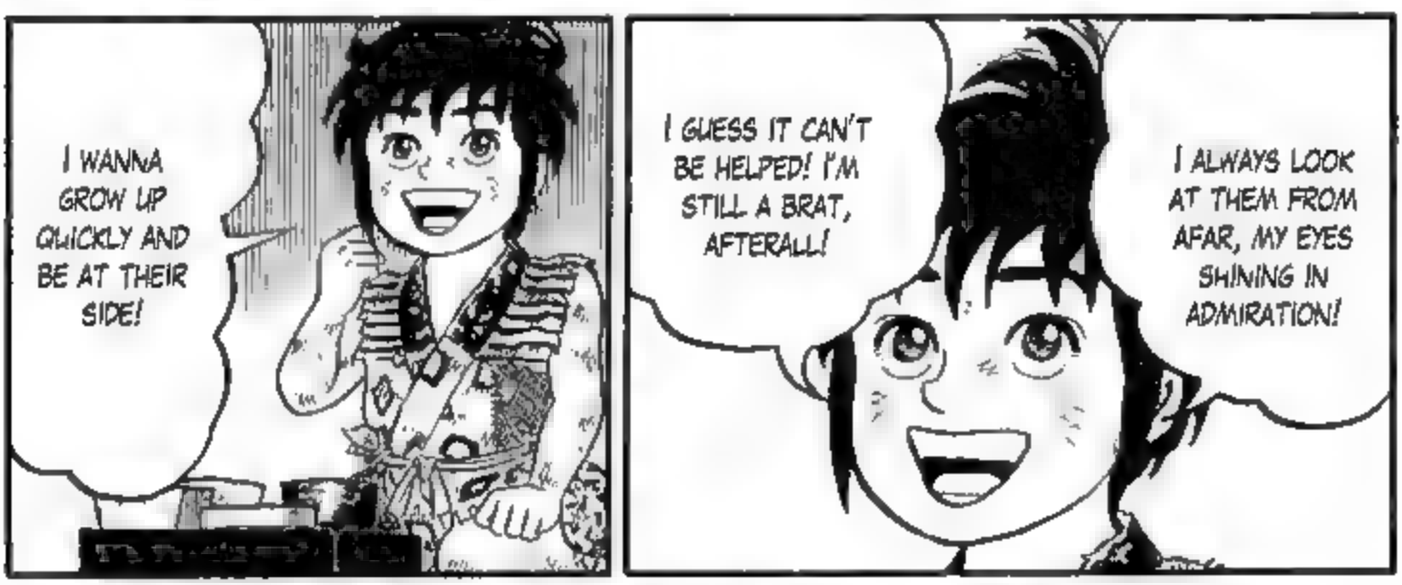

HUH?
GACCHI?
.....
AZUMI, WHAT HOPES AND DREAMS DO YOU...

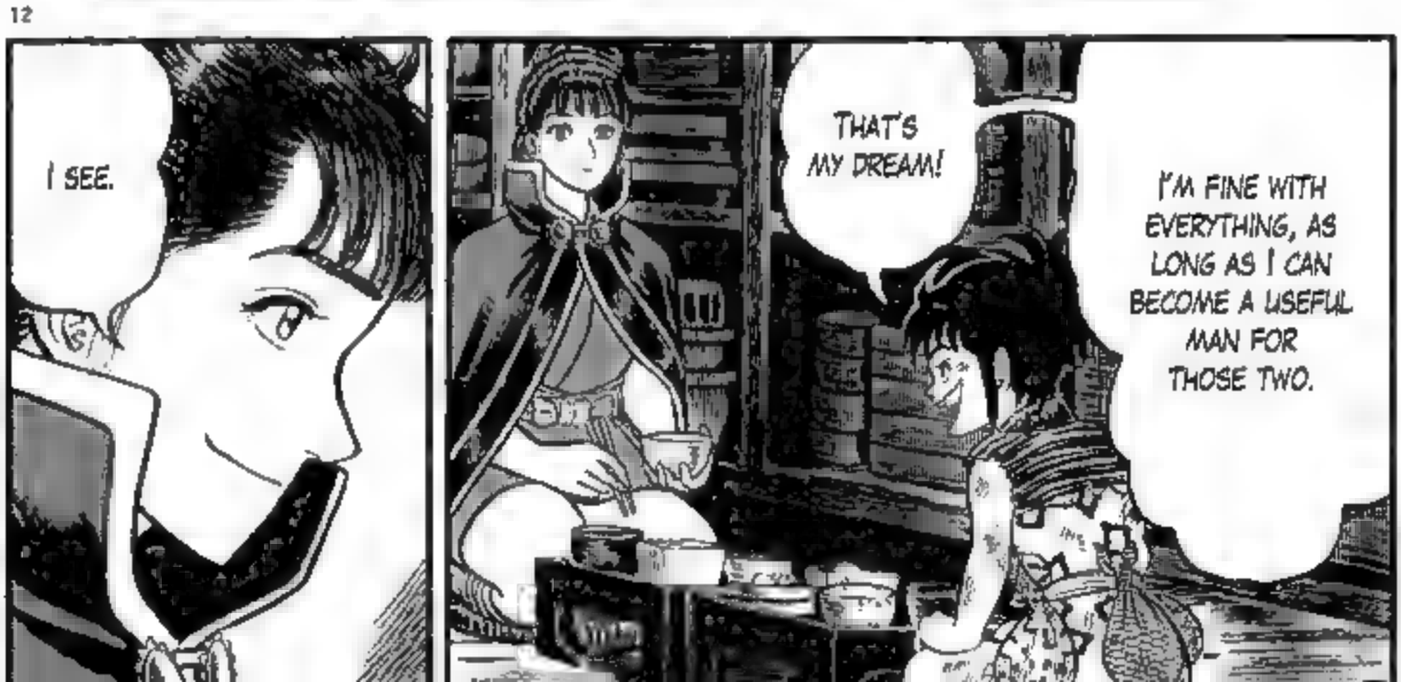
YEP.
YOU MEAN...WHAT KINDA MAN I WANNA BE WHEN I'M AN ADULT!?
.....
DREAM ...!?
WHAT IS YOUR DREAM?


GREATLY
GREATLY
I,
GREATLY,
WHAT IS IT?
MY DREAM IS REAL HUGE!

TWO PEOPLE!
RESPECT AND LOOK UP TO
GREE EEEE AAAA AAATLY

SHIZU-NE-SAMA
AND THE SHOGUNATE MINE ADMINI-STRATOR SHUNJIRŌ-SAMA!
THOSE TWO!
UMM.
I SEE.


I WANNA GROW UP QUICKLY AND BE AT THEIR SIDE!
I GUESS IT CAN'T BE HELPED! I'M STILL A BRAT, AFTERALL!
I ALWAYS LOOK AT THEM FROM AFAR, MY EYES SHINING IN ADMIRATION!


I SEE.
THAT'S MY DREAM!
I'M FINE WITH EVERYTHING, AS LONG AS I CAN BECOME A USEFUL MAN FOR THOSE TWO.

!!
SO YOU WERE HERE... I HEARD VOICES.
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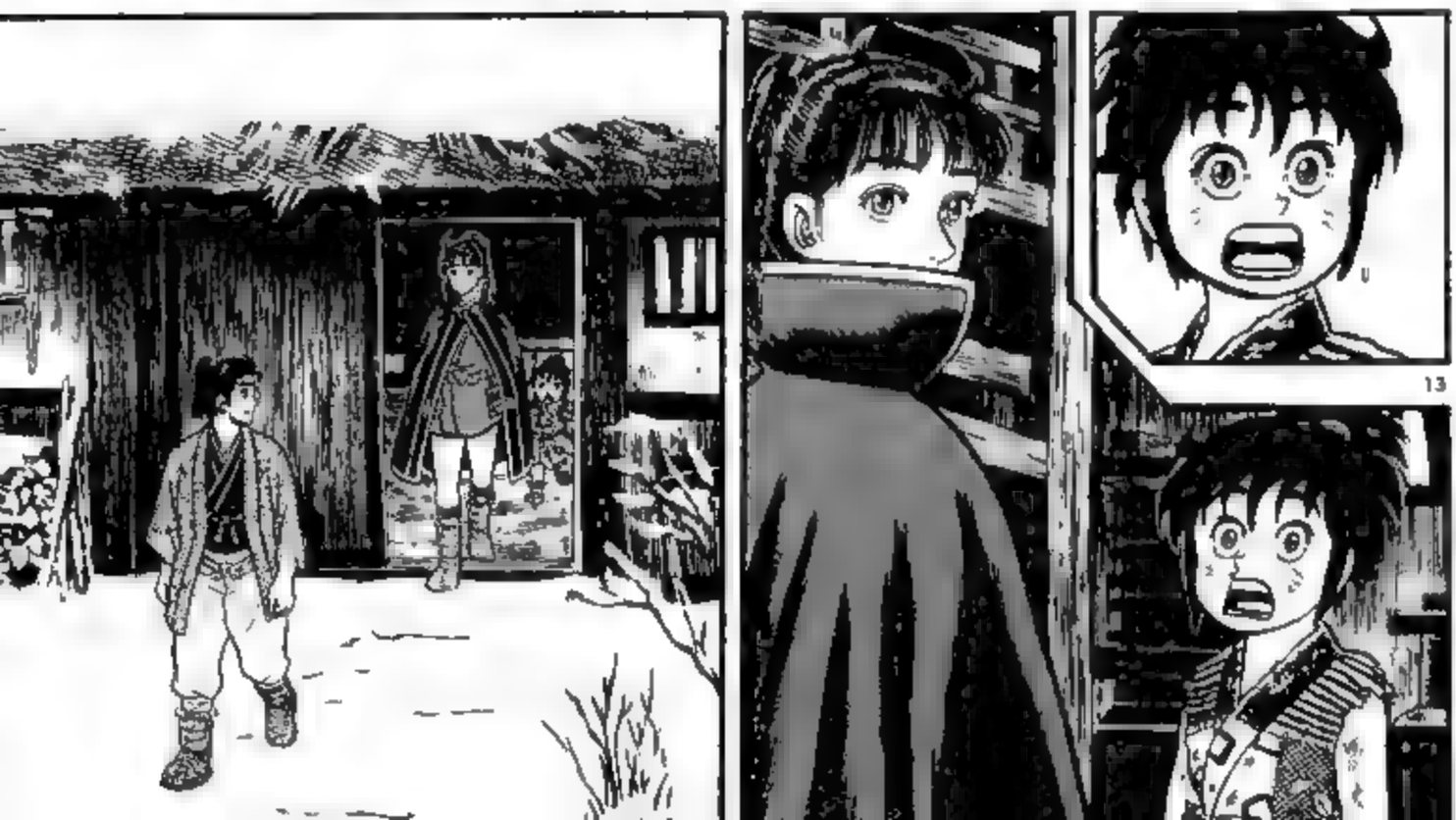
I'VE COME TO PICK YOU UP, AZUMI-SAN.
THERE'S A LOT I WANT TO TALK TO YOU ABOUT
I ALSO WANT TO SHOW YOU MY WORK.



IS...IS IT REALLY ALRIGHT!?
GACCHI, COME ALONG AS WELL!

……

……

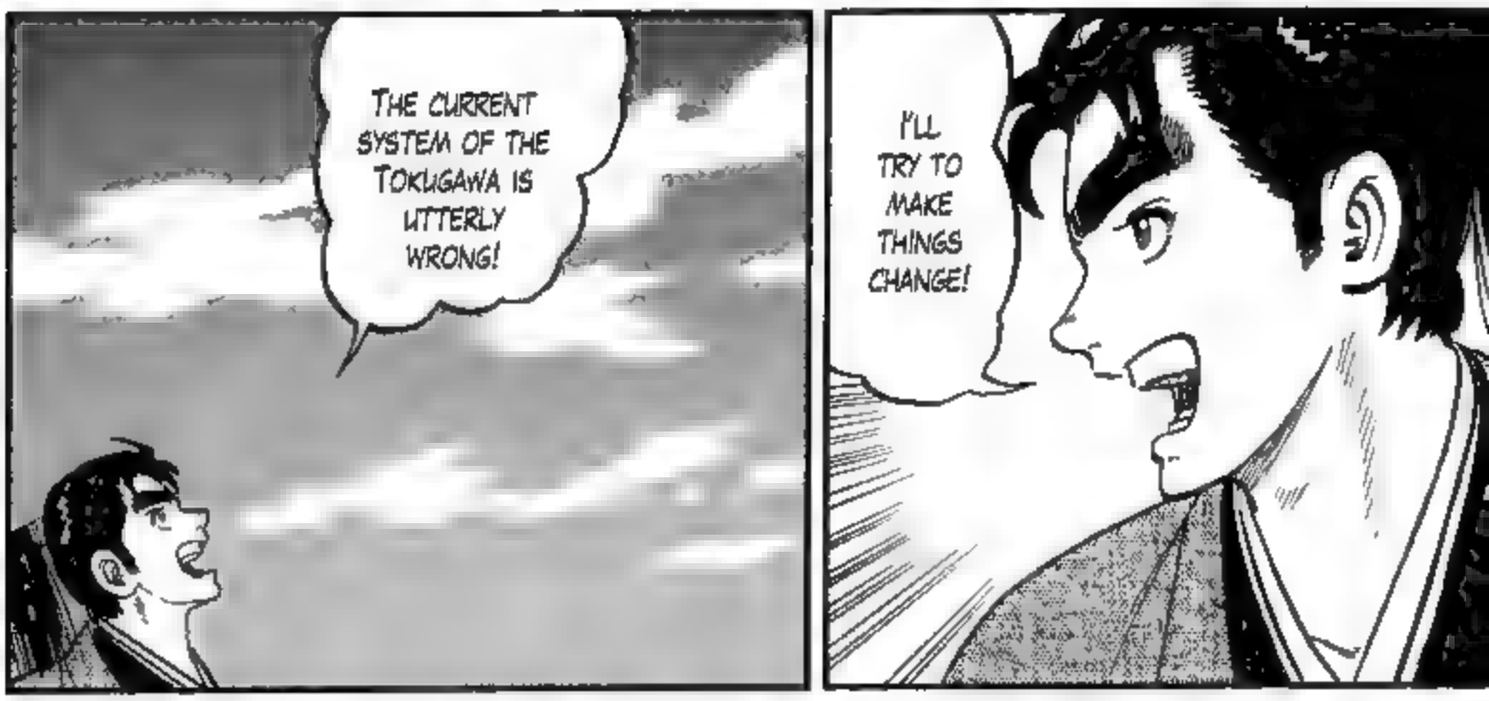
……

……

IT STIRS UP EVERYONE'S DESIRES TO WORK HARDER AND HARDER!
BUT IT'S REALLY COMING TRUE HERE!
IF PEOPLE...WORK WITH EVERYTHING THEY'VE GOT, JUST BECAUSE THEY DID THAT, THEY'RE BOUND TO BECOME RICH. THAT'S NORMALLY A LIE.

I'VE COME TO BELIEVE THIS SYSTEM IS WRONG!
BUT THE SAMURAI CLASS THAT REFUSES TO WORK PRODUCTIVELY LEECHES AWAY FROM PROFITS AS A TAX ON THE LAND!

YES?
.....
AZUMI-SAN!


THE CURRENT SYSTEM OF THE TOKUGAWA IS UTTERLY WRONG!
I'LL TRY TO MAKE THINGS CHANGE!

AN IDEAL COUNTRY WITHOUT FAIL IN THIS VERY FIEF!
I'LL SHOW YOU HOW I BUILD AN IDEAL COUNTRY!

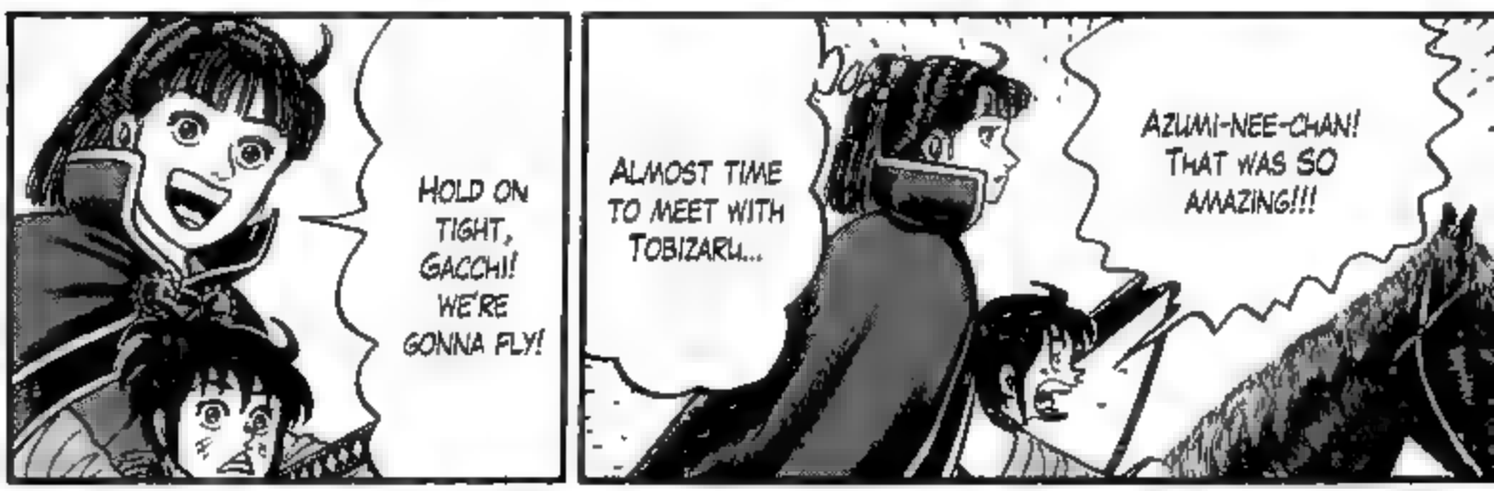
SUCH AN UPROAR.

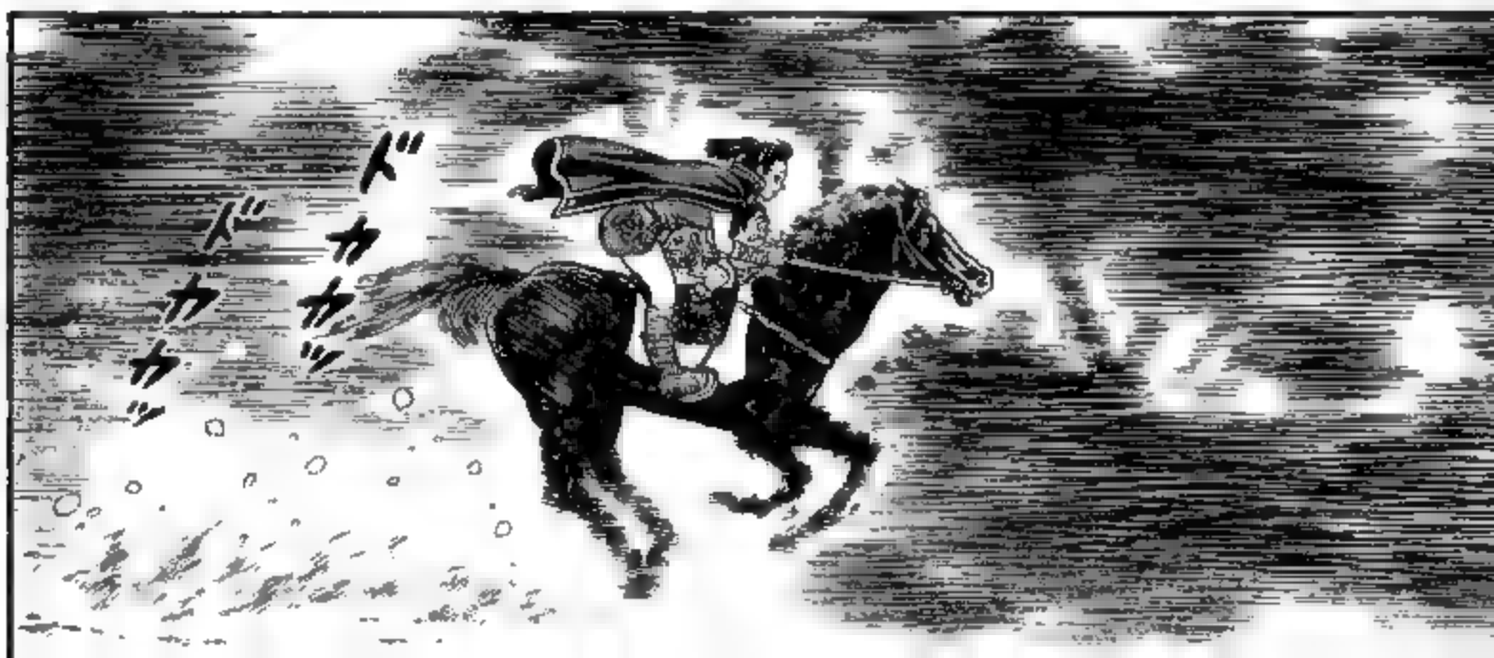
IS THERE A FIRE, PERHAPS?
THERE'S A LOT OF SMOKE DOWN THERE...

PLEASE WAIT FOR ME, AZUMI-SAN.
IT'LL BE TROUBLESOME IF THE FLAMES EXTINGUISH..I'D BEST GO TAKE A LOOK AT IT.
I'LL BE BACK SOON.
NO...IT'S LIKELY THE REGUL-AITON OF THE FURN-ACE FLAMES NOT GOING WELL...

.....
I'LL BE BACK IN CONTACT LATER!
OH! IT'S ALMOST TIME FOR ME TO MEET WITH SOMEONE!

.....
...I SEE...


HOLD ON TIGHT, GACCHI! WE'RE GONNA FLY!
ALMOST TIME TO MEET WITH TOBIZARU...
AZUMI-NEE-CHAN! THAT WAS SO AMAZING!!!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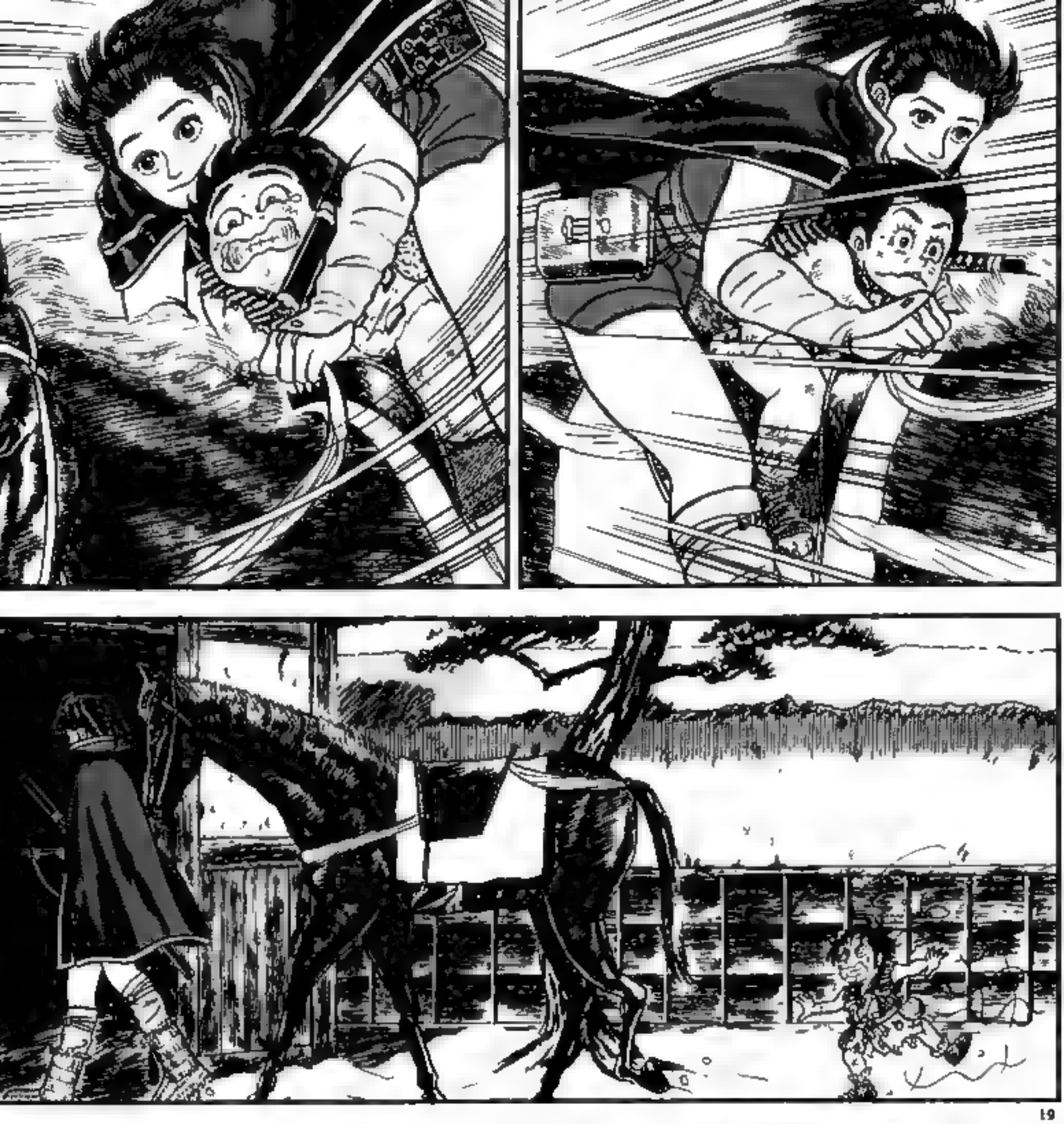
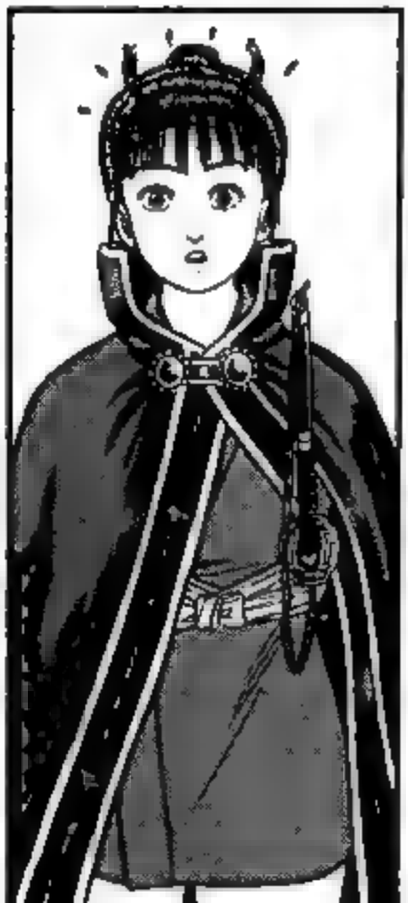


N-NAH! I'M ALRIGHT!
WAS THAT THE FIRST TIME YOU WENT SO FAST ON HORSEBACK!?
GACCHI, ARE YOU OKAY!?
I'M SORRY!

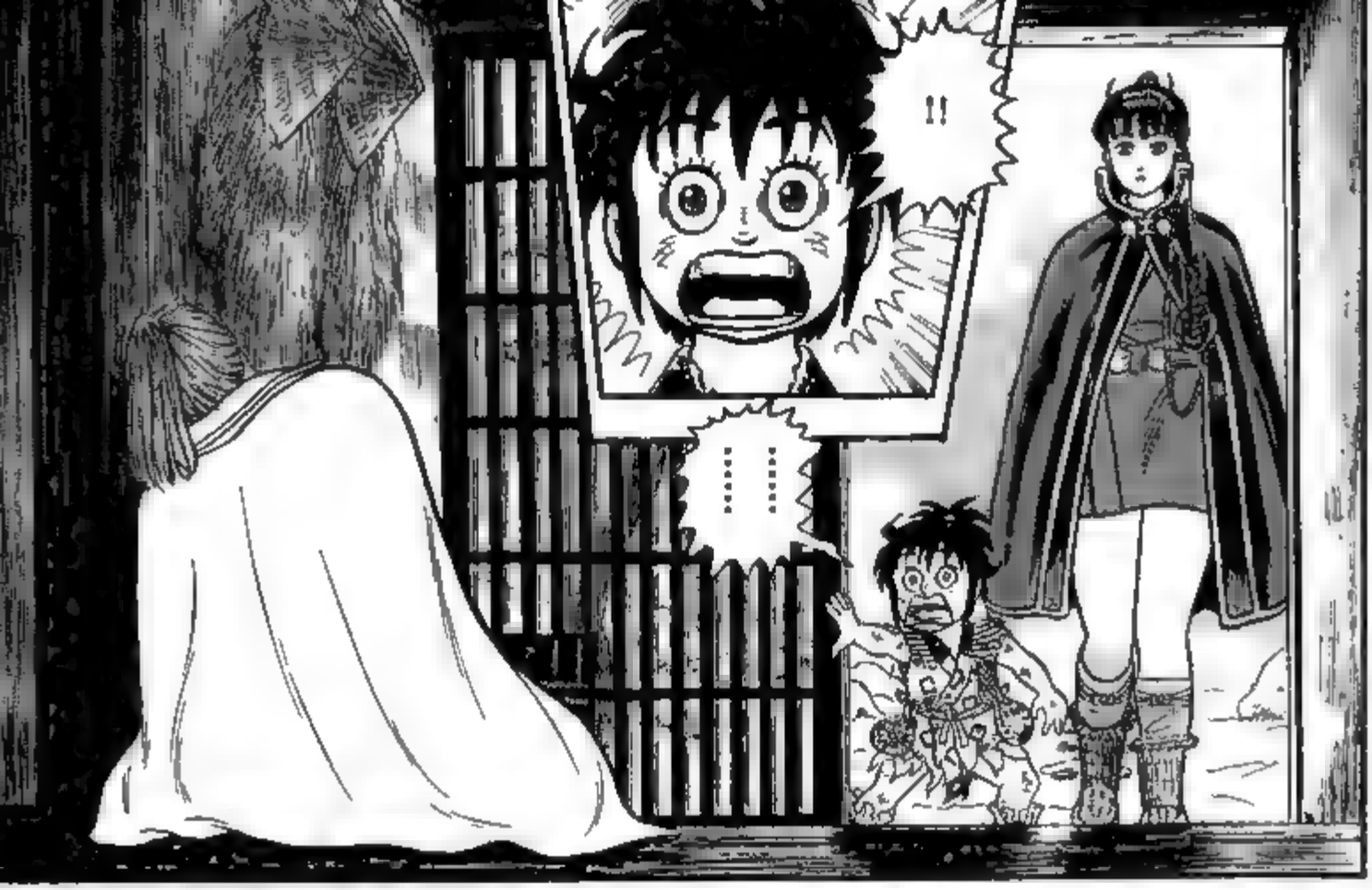
GETTING PICKED UP BY SHUNJIRŌ-SAMA!? THAT'S AMAZING!!
AZUMI-NEE-CHAN! WHO ARE YOU, REALLY!? GETTING TAKEN INTO SHUNJIRŌ-SAMA'S CONFIDENCE!?

WE'VE KNOWN ONE ANOTHER SINCE BEFORE HE CAME TO THESE LANDS.

EH!?
SO!?



AMAZING!
B-BUT STILL...
AHHH...


!!
……

AH, AZUMI!

……
!!

N-NOW SHIZUNE-SAMA!?
I FELL ASLEEP WHILE I WAS WAITING.

WERE OUT SOMEWHERE AND I COULD NOT MEET THEM.
I WAS TOLD THOSE PEOPLE
I WAS CONCERNED ABOUT THOSE FELLOWS CALLED "RASETSUGARASU" OR SOMETHING THAT I HEARD FROM YOU, SO I WENT TO THE CASTLE TO SEE HOW THINGS ARE.

.....
HMM.
THIS IS WHAT GENSAI-SAN AND THE OTHERS SAID...

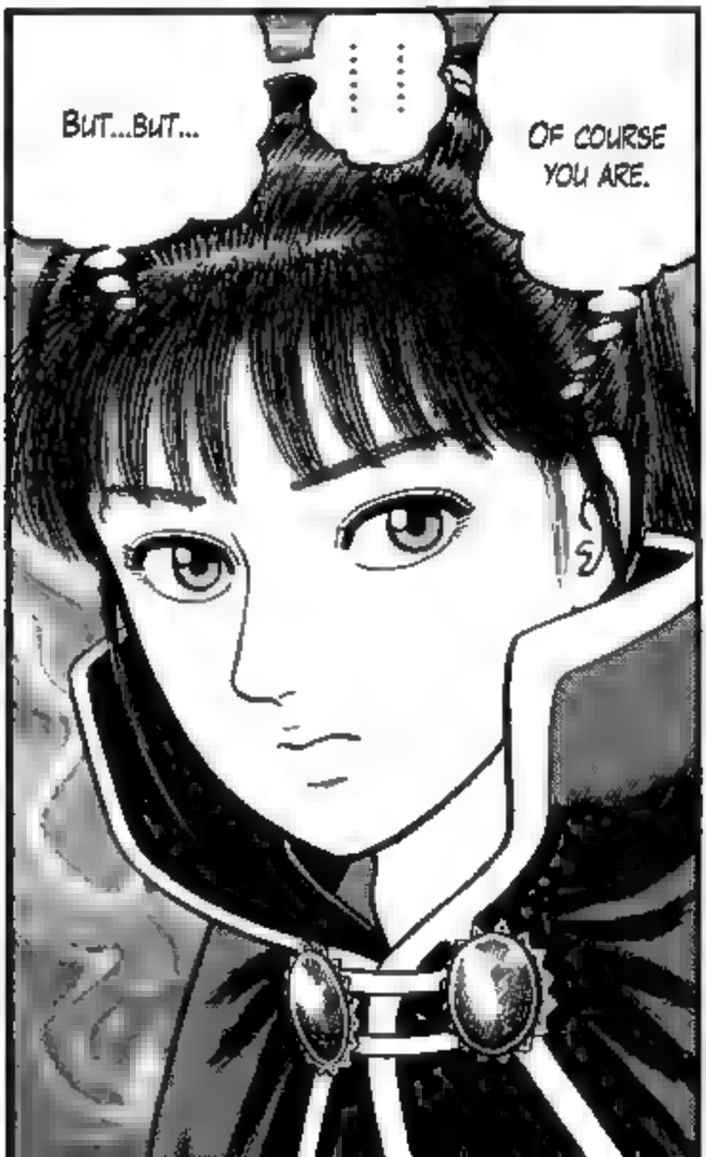
THEY'RE COMRADES-IN-ARMS WHO HAVE FOUGHT ALONGSIDE THE TOYOTOMI AT THE SIEGE OF OSAKA CASTLE.
THEY'RE TALENTED AT THE ART OF WAR, AND HAVE A VIOLENT STREAK...HOWEVER...

THEY CAN'T SEND THEM AWAY...
AND BECAUSE THEY CAME ON THEIR REQUEST
THEY DIDN'T FIND WORK ANYWHERE ELSE...
THAT IS WHAT I'VE BEEN TOLD.

I SEE..

AS FOR THE KILLING OF THE GUARDS STATIONED AT THE COUNTRY BORDERS, THEY SAID THAT...THERE WAS A MISUNDERSTANDING, THEY WERE ATTACKED AND THEY RETALIATED...

AM I BEING DECEIVED? BY GENSAI-SAN AND THE OTHERS?
WHAT DO YOU THINK, AZUMI?


BUT...BUT...
OF COURSE YOU ARE.

I DON'T KNOW..
I CAN'T SAY THAT TO A MAN AS PURE AS HE IS!
AZUMI ?
HM?

.....
IT WILL ALL BE FINE!
IT'S FINE! DON'T WORRY ABOUT A THING!

SEE YOU!

I SEE!
I GET IT!
AHHH!
WHY DID THOSE TWO COME TO AZUMI-SAN'S PLACE ON PURPOSE!?
WHAT'S GOING ON HERE!?

THAT'S HOW THINGS ARE!
I SEEEE!
ドドドキキ
AZUMI-NEE-CHAN IS SO BEAUTIFUL, AFTER ALL!

OHHHH!
!!……

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AZUMI-NEE-CHAN... WHO...
SO...
BUT YOU KNOW...YOU CAN'T HAVE THEM BOTH!
THERE'S NO MISTAKING THIS!! THOSE TWO ARE BOTH IN LOVE WITH YOU!
WHO'S THE ONE?!!
WHO'S THE ONE YOU LIKE!?!?

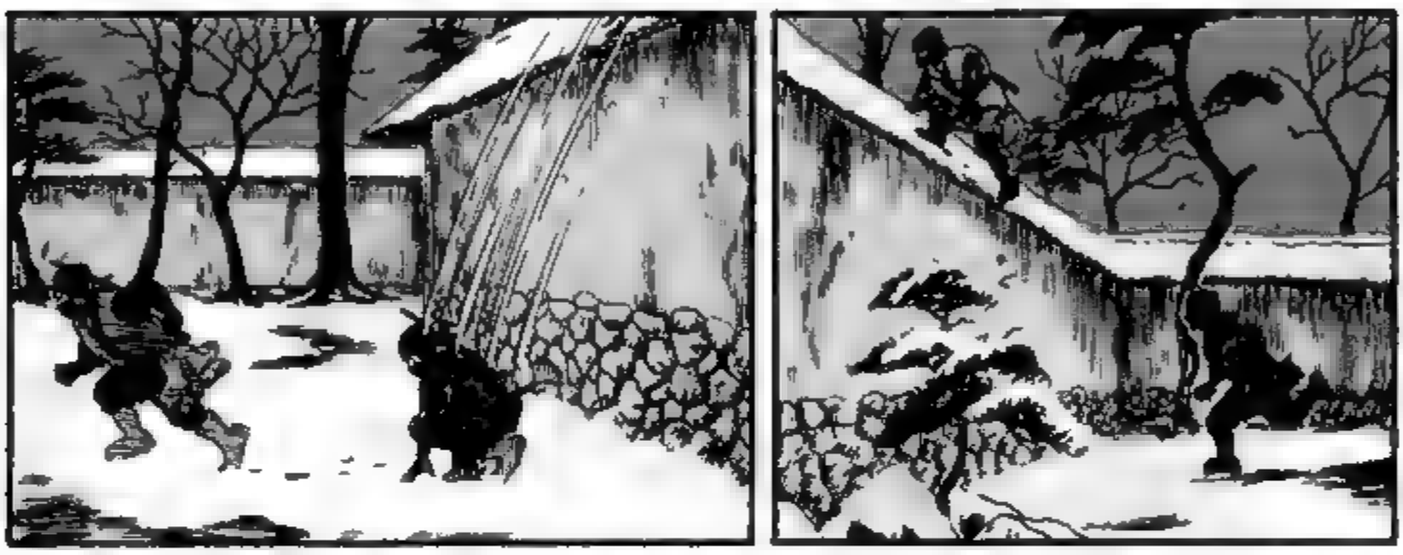
CHAPTER 3:
RESCUING
COMRADES

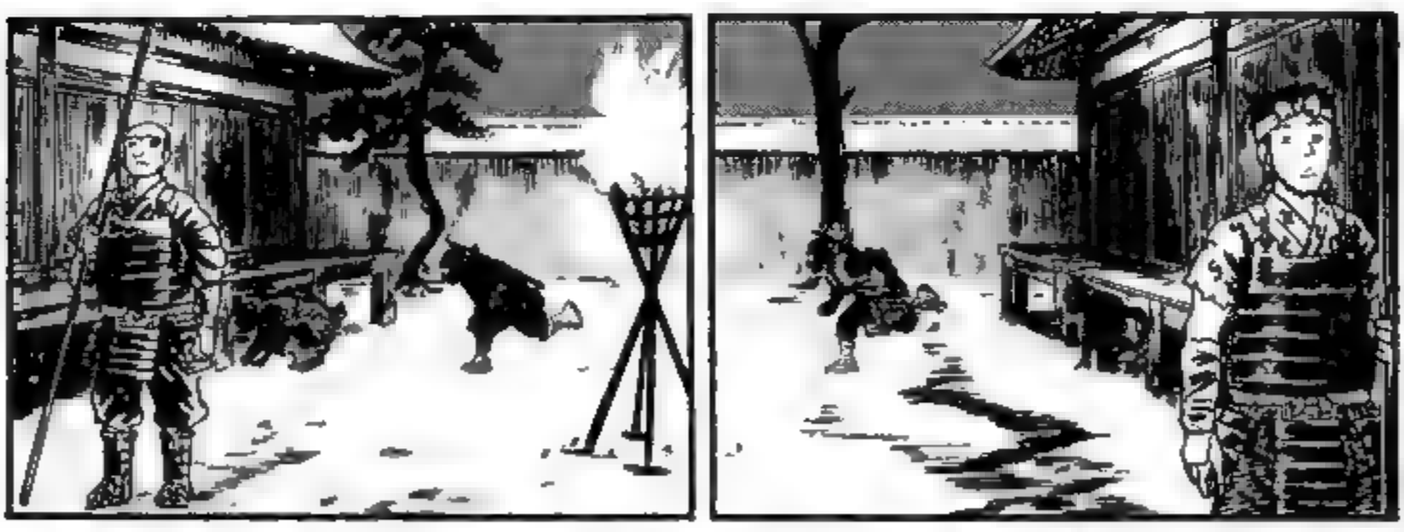
CHANGE.
OHH!
SO I PREPARED THIS.
GIVEN WHO YOU ARE... IT'S UNLIKELY YOU'D HAVE STAYED QUIET.

2
JUST TO BE SURE, YOU'VE RECEIVED SHINOBI TRAINING, TOO, RIGHT?
I'M FINE, DON'T WORRY.
MORE IMPORTANTLY, TOBIZARU...DOESN'T YOUR SHOULDER HURT?

YES!
NOW, LET'S BE OFF!
NO NEED FOR CONC-ERN.
3
I WONDER.
IT'S LIKELY THE CASTLE SAMURAI ARE DEVISING A STRATEGY TO RETAKE THE CASTLE.

I BET THEY'LL GIVE UP LITTLE BY LITTLE!
THEY HOLD THEIR LIVES TOO DEAR!
THEY AIN'T NO CHANCE AT ANY RATE!

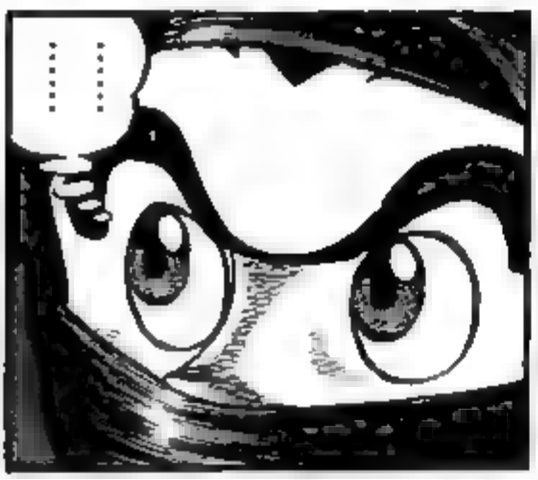




AREN'T WE RIGHT HERE?

CAN YOU TELL WHERE WE ARE NOW!?

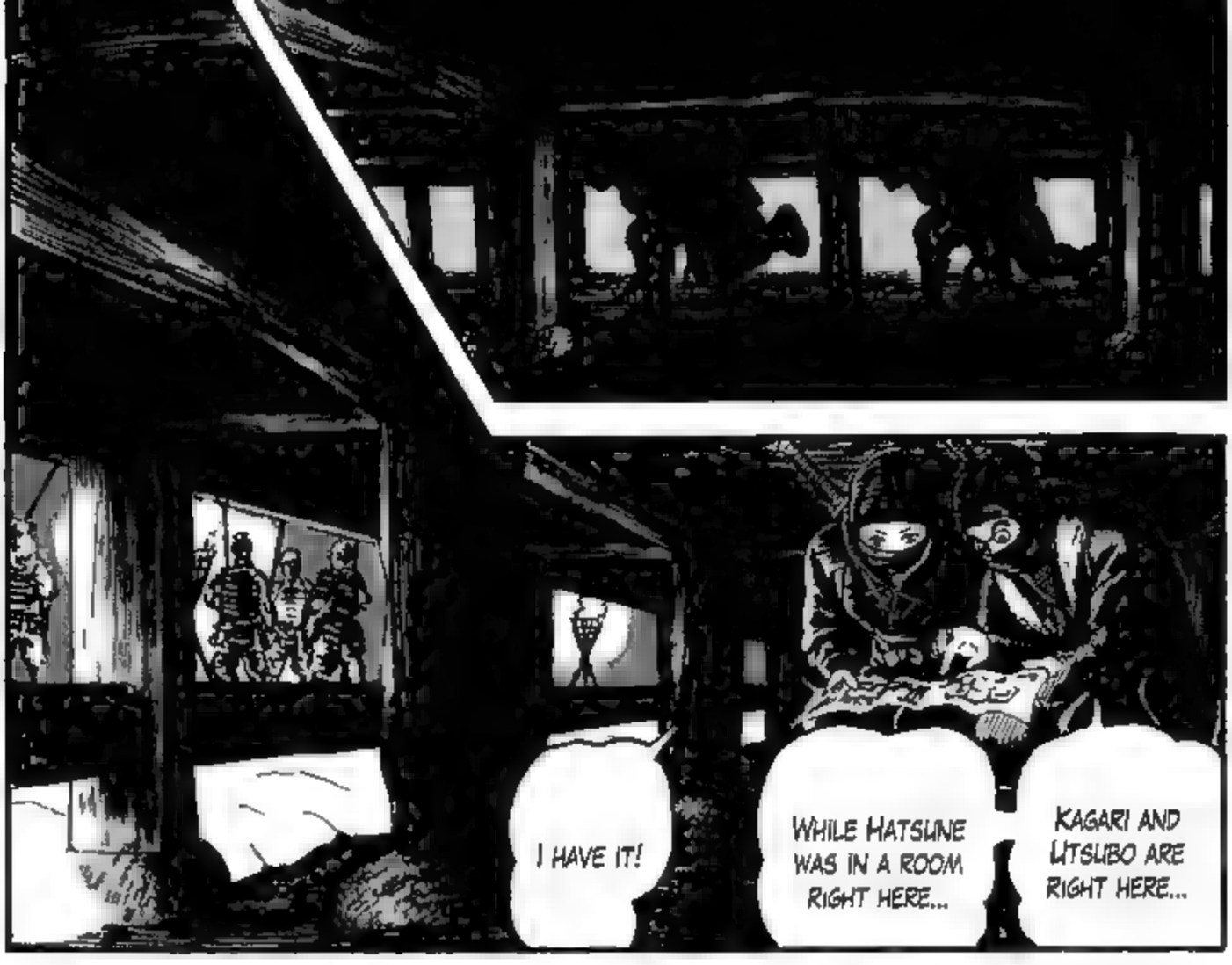
IMPRESSIVE!
OOOH.


.....

I DRILLED THIS CASTLE'S TOPOGRAPHY INTO MY MIND WHEN I FIRST CAME HERE.

.....

SEEMS LIKE HE WAS REALLY SOMETHING... I'M AMAZED.
THAT GRAMPA WHO RAISED YOU AND TRAINED YOU...


I HAVE IT!
WHILE HATSUNE WAS IN A ROOM RIGHT HERE...
KAGARI AND UTSUBO ARE RIGHT HERE...

GOT IT.
AND HERE IS THE MEETING POINT.

OKAY!
THEN, I TAKE KAGARI AND UTSUBO, YOU TAKE CARE OF HATSUNE.

LEAVE IT TO ME!

TOBIZARU, YOU'LL HAVE TO STEAL A PAIR OF KATANA FROM THE GUARDS.

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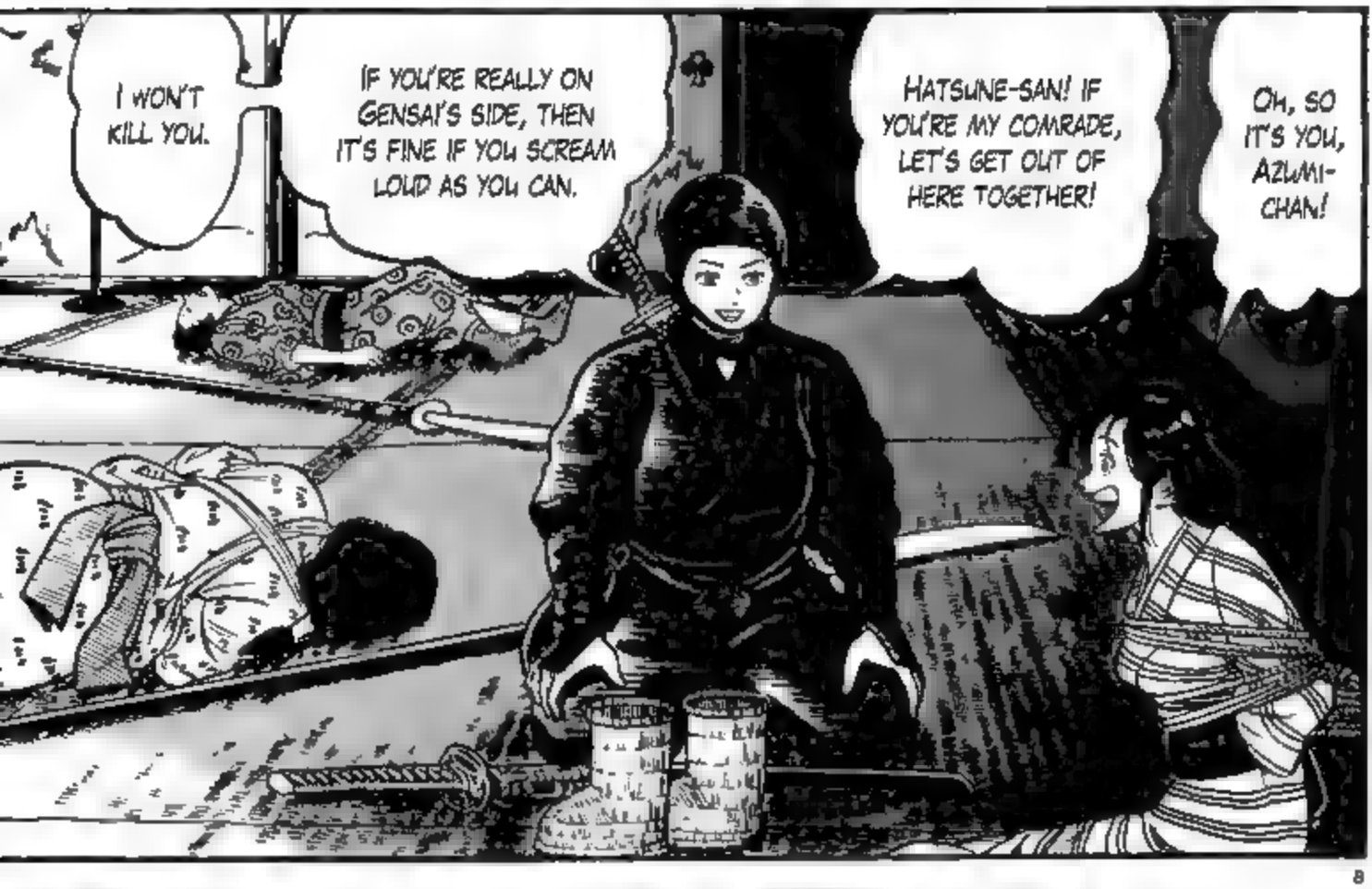
AAA AAAA AAH!


I WON'T KILL YOU.
IF YOU'RE REALLY ON GENSAI'S SIDE, THEN IT'S FINE IF YOU SCREAM LOUD AS YOU CAN.
HATSUNE-SAN! IF YOU'RE MY COMRADE, LET'S GET OUT OF HERE TOGETHER!
OH, SO IT'S YOU, AZUMI-CHAN!

YOU'RE SO COOOOOOL, AZUMI-CHAAAAN!

!?
AHAHAHAH HAHAHAHA!

WE KNOW IT.
YOU KNOW THE WAY FROM HERE, RIGHT?
LET'S CUT ACROSS HERE!

RIGHT!
OKAY?
SINCE THE GUARDS ARE ALMOST ALL VILLAGERS, DON'T KILL THEM, JUST STRIKE THEM WITH THE BACK OF THE SWORD!!

AHH!

SAMURAAAAA!! THERE ARE SUSPICIOUS PEOPLE IN THE GROUNDS!
SUSPICIOUS PEOPLE SIGHTED!
THEY'RE FLEEING NOW!!
NO...THEY CAME FROM INSIDE!
WHAAAAAT?! HAVE THE CASTLE SAMURAI COME TO ATTACK US!?

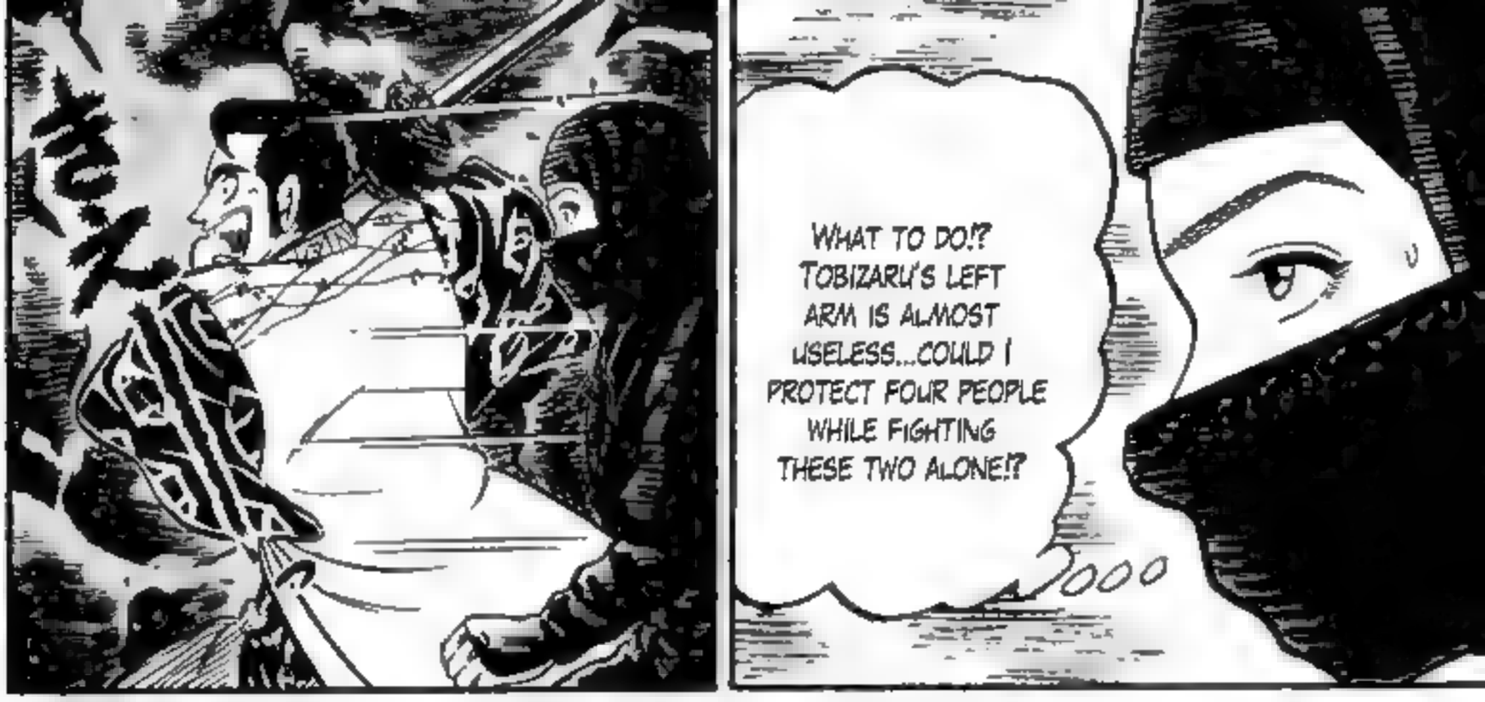
WE'RE JUST RUNNING AWAY NOOOOOW!
BUH-BYEEEE!
.....
BOTH KAGARI-DONO AND HATSUNE-SAN HAVE TURNED INTO CHILDREN...!?
WHAT'S WRONG HERE?

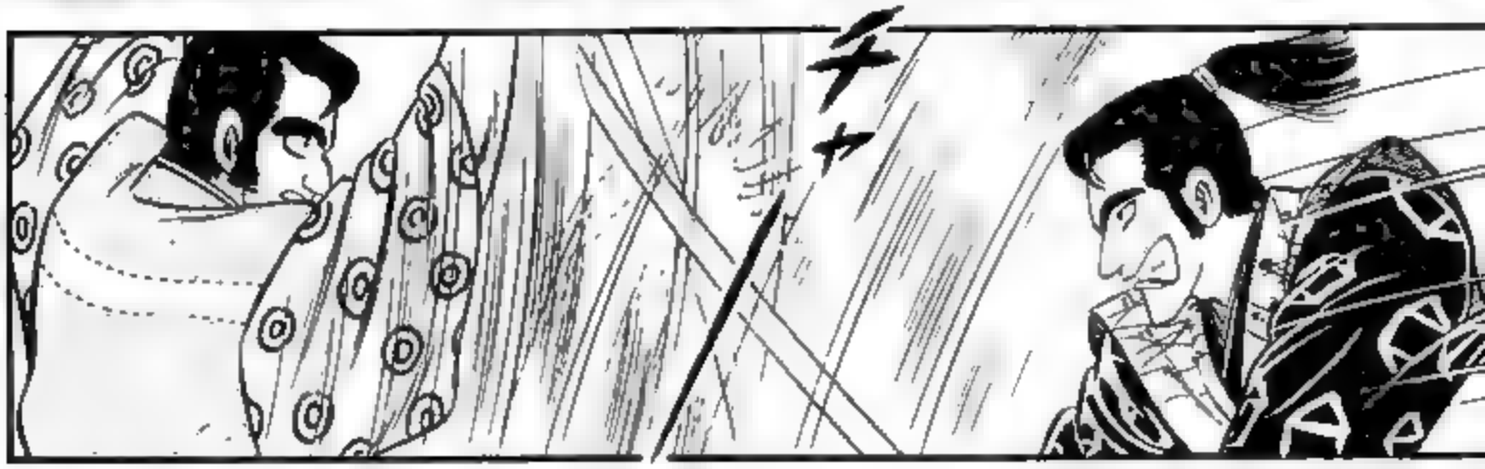
SHIT! TODO AND SAGAWA!
AAH!

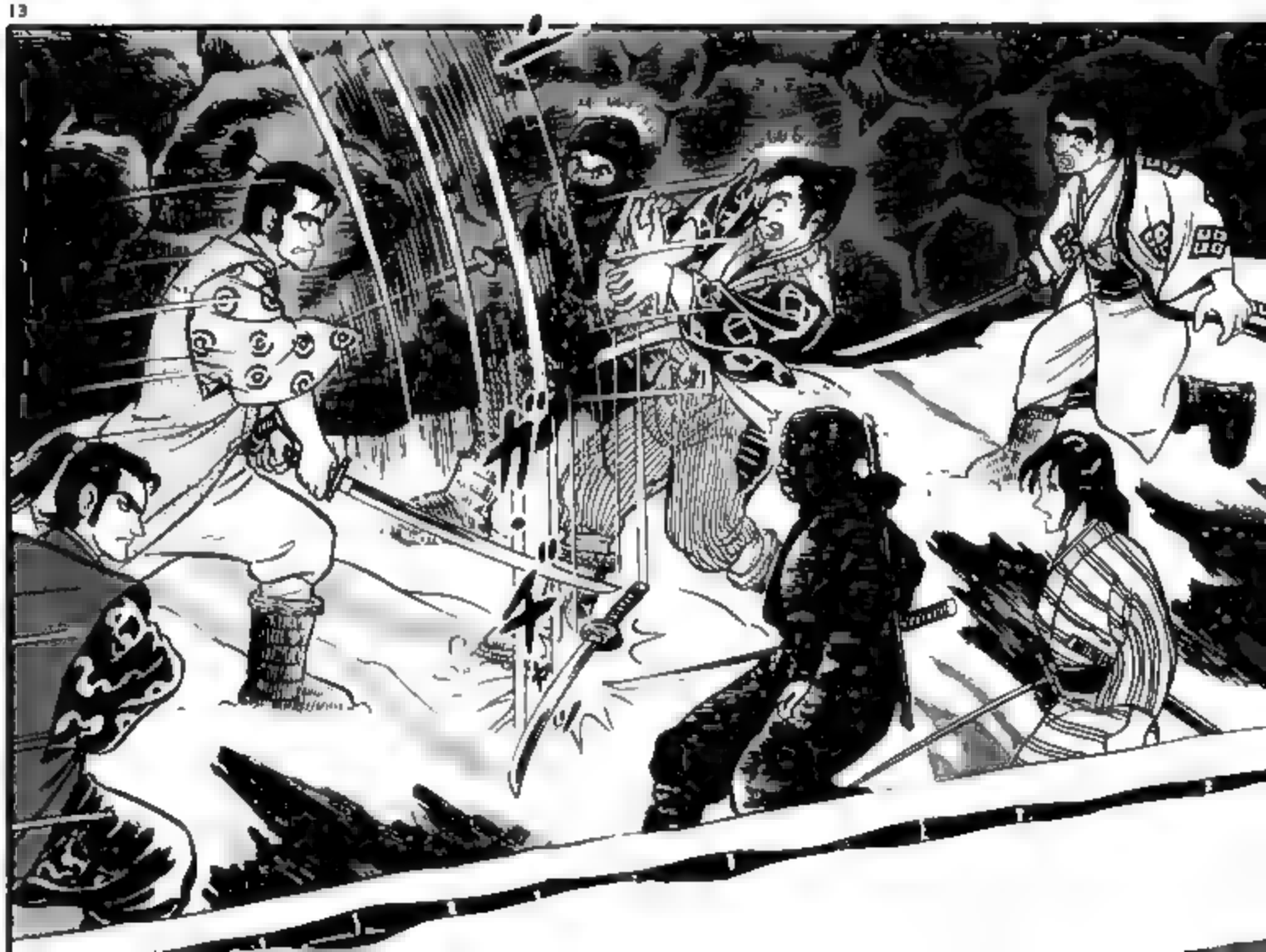
SO HE DID SURV-IVE.

IT'S THE SHINOBI WHO WAS SHOT AT THE CLIFF THE OTHER DAY..

THOSE TWO ARE SKILLED...

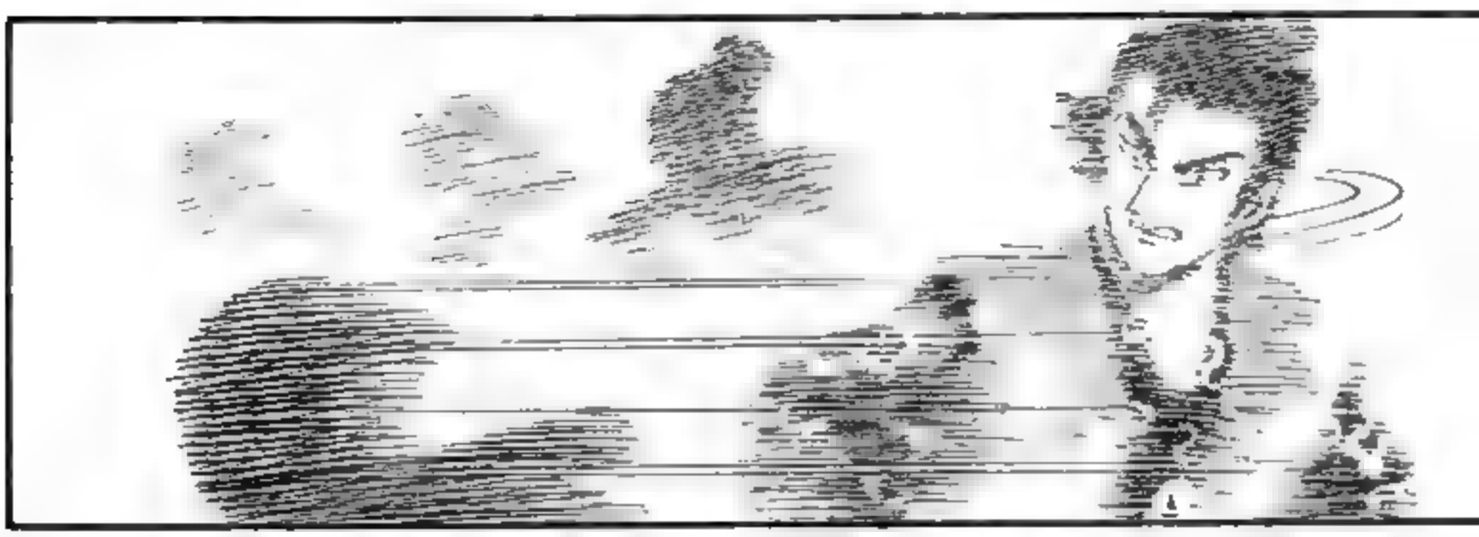

WHAT TO DO!? TOBIZARU'S LEFT ARM IS ALMOST USELESS...COULD I PROTECT FOUR PEOPLE WHILE FIGHTING THESE TWO ALONE!?





THE MOMENT OUR SWORDS LOCK, FLEE!

RUN
AWAAAY!



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KEEEP RUNNING!

AHH! UTSU-BO!!

AAAH!
AAA AAH!
GUOOO OOOH!
LEAVE ME! JUST RUN!
IT'S OVER FOR ME!

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WE HAVE TO RUN!

ボ
LET'S STOP.
CO-UGH
IT'S ENO-UGH.

ANYWAYS, THAT SHINOBI...
WAS QUITE CAPABLE ...
IT'LL BE NO PROBLEM. AT ALL.
EVEN IF WE LET THEM RUN AWAY, THOSE GUYS ARE ALREADY USELESS,

LOOKS LIKE WE LOST THEM, SOMEHOW

I'M SORRY.. I COULDN'T PROTECT UTSUBO-DONO..
DON'T WORRY, IT'S NOT A DEEP WOUND.

.....
I MET THOSE TWO IN THE MOUNTAINS, AND THEY MEANT BUSINESS....
.....
THEY'RE REMARKABLE.

MORE IMPORTANTLY, WHERE'RE WE GONNA HIDE FROM NOW ON!?
.....
WE'RE ALL READY TO DIE.
IF IT'S NEEDED.

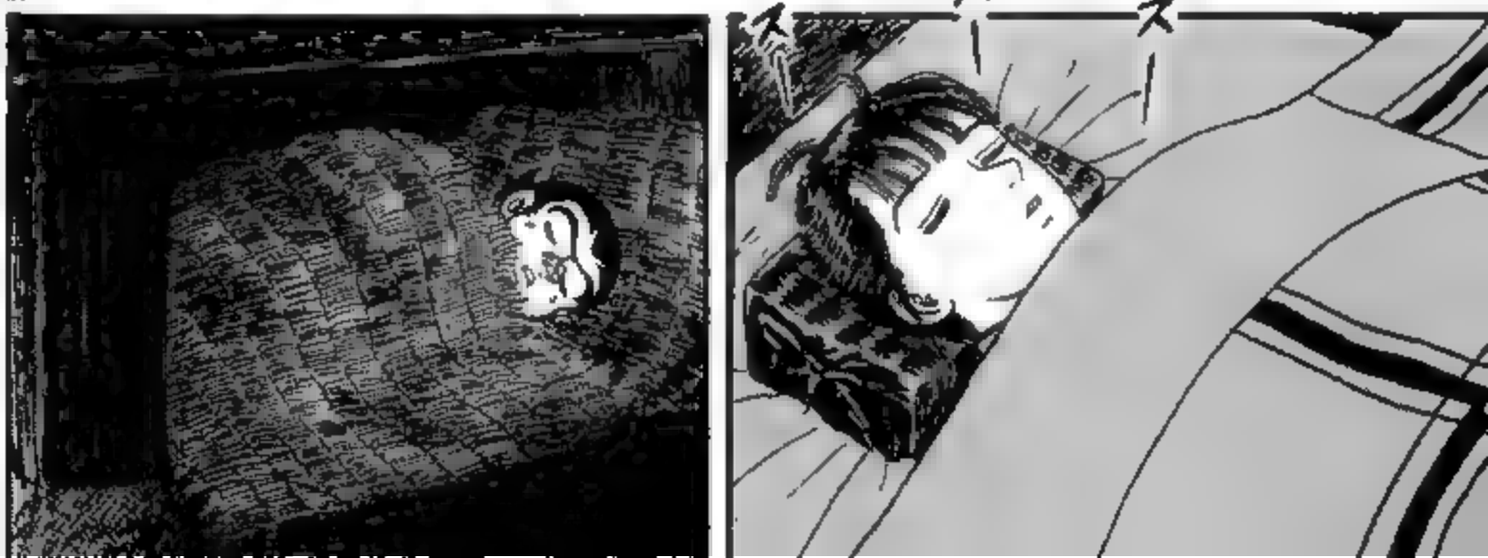
THOSE MEN KNOW ABOUT IT!
HUH!?
WE'LL GO BACK TO THAT HOUSE.

SO WHEN THEY COME TO ATTACK, THE HOUSE'LL BE A CONVENIENT SPOT TO HOLE UP. IT'S A PLACE WHERE WE CAN MAKE A STAND EASILY.
THEY'LL FIND US SOONER OR LATER WHEREVER WE CHOOSE TO HIDE.

EH!?
HM!?
THOSE GUYS DIDN'T CARE TOO MUCH ABOUT WHAT WE DID..
BY THE BY...SOMEHOW...IT LOOKS LIKE

.....
THEY'VE ALREADY ACHIEVED WHAT THEY WERE AIMING FOR..
IN OTHER WORDS...

.....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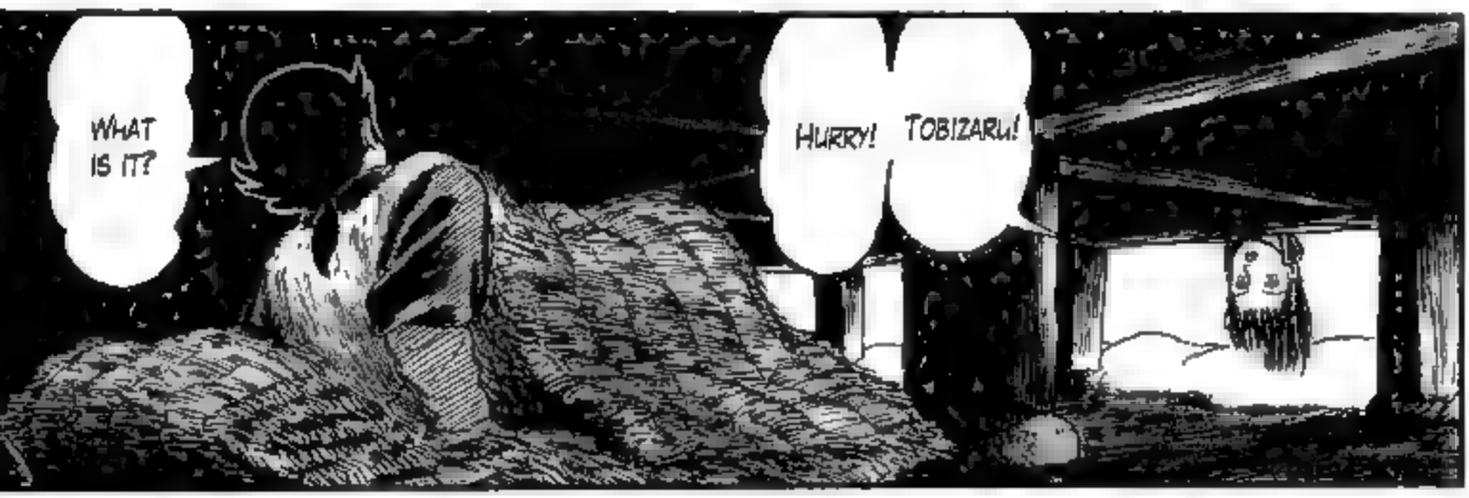
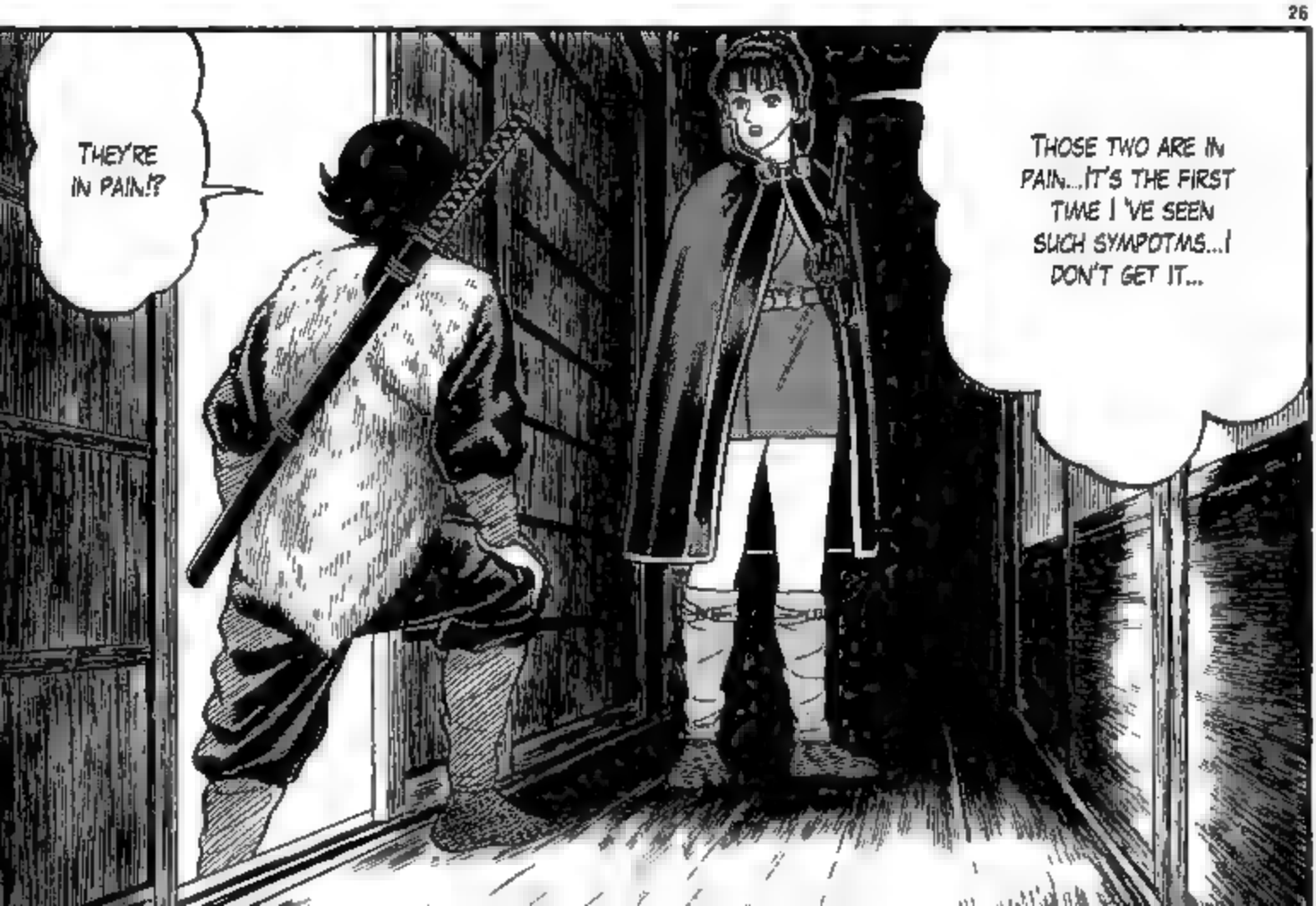

WHAT IS IT?
HURRY! TOBIZARU!


THEY'RE IN PAIN!?
THOSE TWO ARE IN PAIN...IT'S THE FIRST TIME I 'VE SEEN SUCH SYMPOTMS...I DON'T GET IT...

バキキッ

……
WHAT'S HURTING!?
WHAT IS IT!?

TAKE US TO SHUNJIRŌ-DON'S PLACE!!!

GIVE US THAAAT!
THAT'S RIGHT!!! THE MEDICINE HE MAKES!

SHUNJIRŌ-DONO!?

JUST TO FEEL ITS SMOKE IS FINE! I WANT IT!
I WANT TO TAKE THAT MEDICINE!
THAT MEDI-CINE!
TAKE US TO SHUNJIRŌ-DONO NOOOOOW!

THE MEDICINE THAT SHUNJIRŌ-DONO MAAAKES!
.....
29
.....!?
AAAAAAH! I WAAAAANT IIIIIIIIT!

CHAPTER 4: TIME TO MOVE

SHUNJIRŌ-SAMA...

!!
SHUNJIRŌ-SAMA!
EXCUSE ME!

.....
SHUNJIRŌ-SAMA!
.....

IT'S FINE. WHAT DO YOU NEED?
FORGIVE ME FOR DISTURBING YOU SO EARLY AND INTERRUPTING YOUR SLEEP.

SHUNJIRO EVEN CALLS HER NAME IN HIS SLEEP!
THAT WOMAN...
AZUMI ..

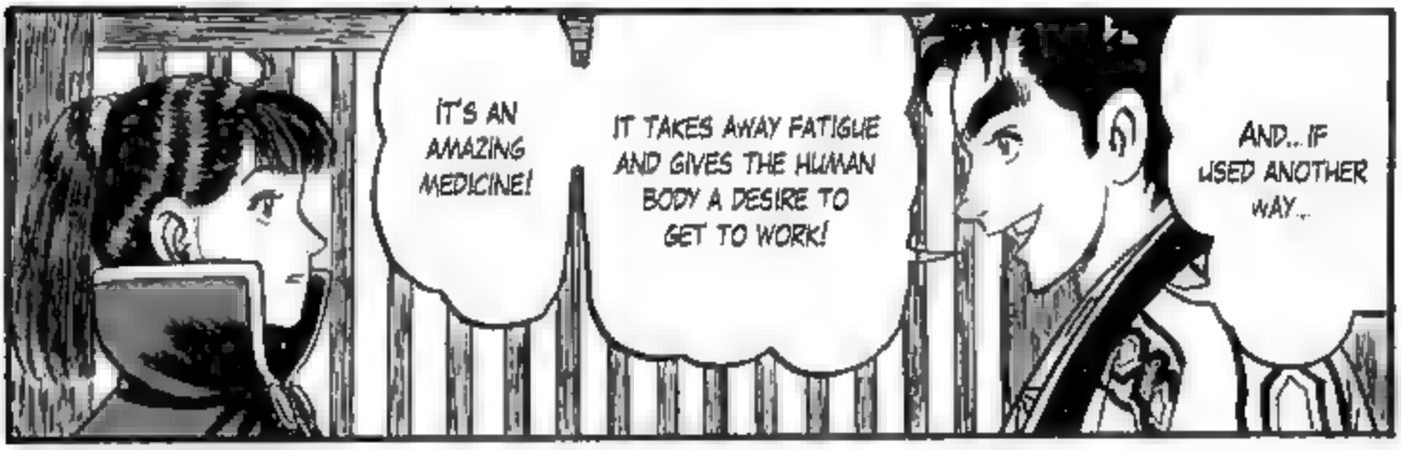
.....

YES! THEY SEEM TO BE IN A LOT OF PAIN, TOO!
AND THEY'RE SAYING THEY WANT TO TAKE THE MEDICINE THAT I MAKE?
I SEE.. KAGARI-DONO AND HATSUNE-DONO ARE IN PAIN...

AH!
SHUN-JIRŌ-DONO...
WHY ARE THOSE TWO...!? DID GENSAI-DONO AND THE OTHERS MAKE THEM TAKE IT!?
I UNDERSTAND!! I'LL HAVE IT READY IMMEDIATELY!!
JUST WHAT SORT OF MEDICINE IS IT?
BUT...
IT'S THE FIRST TIME I'VE SEEN ITS LIKE...
UNDER-STOOD.
IF YOU MAKE THEM TAKE IT, THEN THEY'RE SURE TO CALM DOWN. HOWEVER, BE SURE TO GET THE RIGHT QUANTITY

WON'T THEY EVENTUALLY JUST WANT IT AGAIN AND SUFFER THE SAME THING?
EVEN IF TAKING IT MAKES THEM CALM DOWN...
WHY DO THEY WANT IT SO BAD THAT THEY'RE SUFFERING?

HUH?!
THIS MEDICINE...I T HAS THE EFFECT OF RELIEVING THE PAIN OF PEOPLE WHO HAVE BORNE SERIOUS WOUNDS...


IT'S AN AMAZING MEDICINE!
IT TAKES AWAY FATIGUE AND GIVES THE HUMAN BODY A DESIRE TO GET TO WORK!
AND.. IF USED ANOTHER WAY..

ALL I CAN THINK..IS THAT KAGARI-DONO AND HATSUNE-DONO.. HOWEVER IT HAPPENED...HAVE GRAVELY MISTAKEN HOW TO ACTUALLY USE IT.
W-WAS THERE A MEDICINE LIKE THAT?...I DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT IT..

.....
ALRIGHT! I'LL BE BACK IN A FLASH AND I'LL HAVE THEM TAKE THIS RIGHT AWAY!

IS THE RUMOR THAT TWO CASTLE SAMURAI WERE KILLED LAST NIGHT TRUE?
WHAAAT!? NO WAY!
WHY KILL CASTLE SAMURAI!?
SHOULDN'T THEY BE THE ONES KILLING THOSE RŌNIN FOR STEALING THAT CASTLE FROM THEM!?
INSTEAD OF VICE-VERSA?

OOOOH! THERE'S SHIZUNE-SAMA!
AHHHH!
SHIZUNE-SAMAA!

KONISHI SHIZUNE!

GET READY!
KONISHI SHIZUNE! YOU ARE THE MASTERMIND OF THE REBELS WHO IMPRISONED OUR LORD AND TOOK OUR CASTLE FROM US!

MAKE WAAA AAAA AAY!

EEEK! SHIZUNE-SAMAAA!

YOU WERE HURTING SO MUCH!
YOU'RE ALREADY FEELING NO PAIN!?

……
……
AZUMI-
NEE-
CHAAA
AAAN!

WAS HE KILLED!?
SHIZUNE-SAMA WAS ATTACKED!?
WHAT HAPP-ENED !?

PROTECTED HIM!
STOOD BEFORE HIM AND
THREE MASKED MEN DRESSED IN BLACK
IN DANGER! BUT...
HE WAS VERY NEARLY

CASTLE SAMURAI! THREE OF 'EM!
WHO ATTACKED HIM?
RASETSU-GARASU WITHOUT A DOUBT ..
MASKED AND IN BLACK...
AND THE RASETSU-GARASU DEFENDED HIM?
THE CASTLE SAMURAI...ATTACKED SHIZUNE-SAMA!?

WERE THOSE SAMURAI KILLED?
DAMN YOU, CASTLE SAMURAI!
ATTACKING SHIZUNE-SAMA IS UNFORGIVE-ABLE!!!
THAT THE CASTLE SAMURAI JUST GAVE UP AND FLED AT THE END!
THE MEN IN BLACK WERE JUST SOOOO STRONG

THEY'RE REEEEEAL STRONG!
THOSE THREE BLACK CLAD MEN INTRODUCED THEMSELVES AS OUR COMRADES, AND GUESTS AT GENSAI-SAMA'S PLACE.

THERE'S NO MISTAKE THAT THE THREE MEN WHO ATTACKED WERE CASTLE SAMURAI?
GAC-CHI.

AND THREE CASTLE SAMURAI ATTACKED ...
THERE ARE SIX PEOPLE IN THE RASETSU-GARASU. WHY ONLY THREE?

BUT THEY SAID THEY WERE CASTLE SAMURAI!
THEY WORE BAMBOO HATS SO YOU COULDN'T SEE THEIR FACES.

UH!?
WERE THEY CASTLE SAMURAI WHOSE FACES WERE KNOWN TO SOME-ONE?

THEY SAID THEY WOULDN'T FORGIVE THEM FOR TAKING THEIR CASTLE!

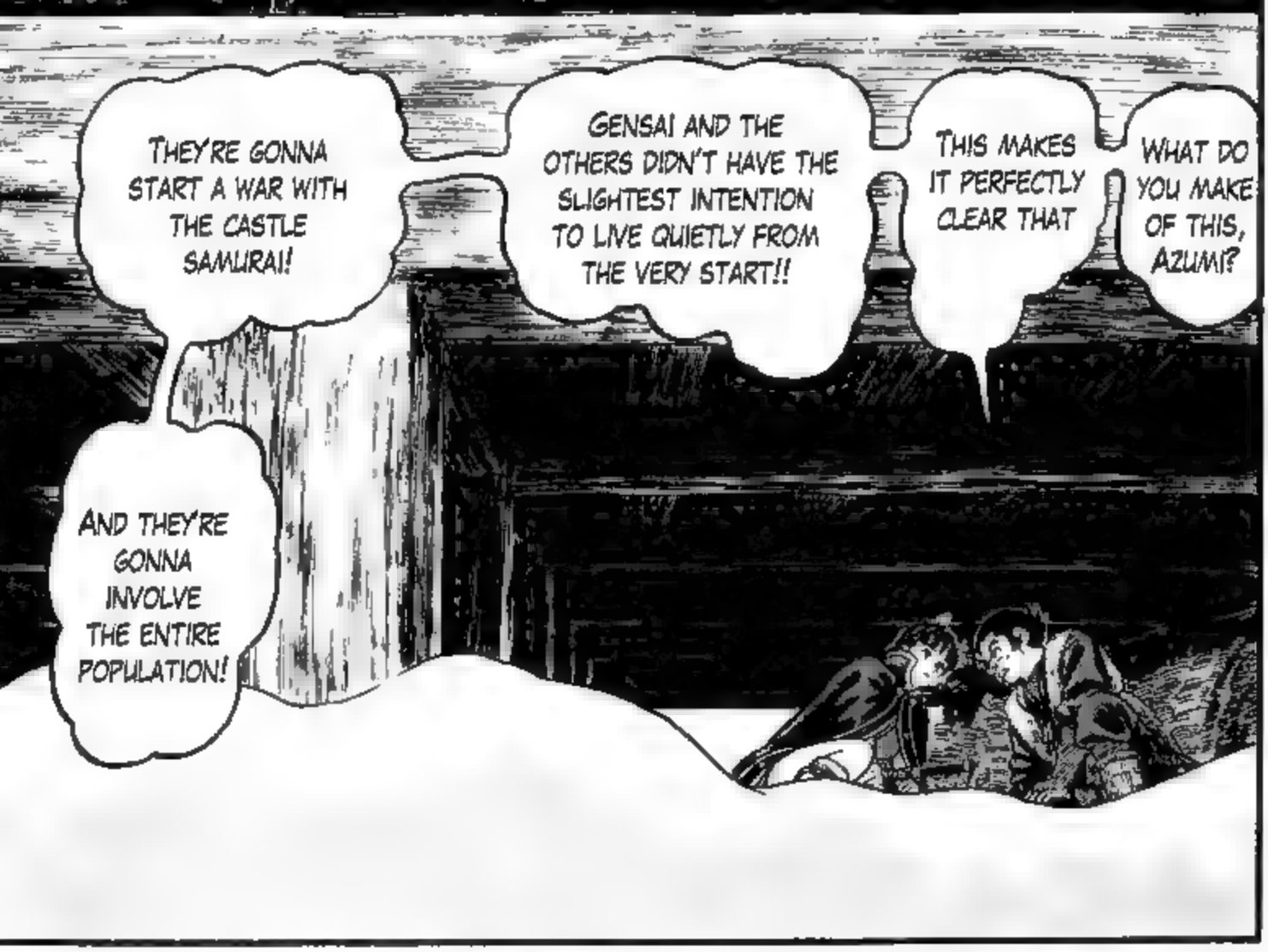
NO WONDER ...

SO THAT'S HOW IT IS...
I SEE.

THEY'RE BEYOND FORGIVENESS, RIGHT!? TRYING TO KILL SHIZUNE-SAMA...THE DAMN CASTLE SAMURAI BASTARDS!

GACCHI! THANK YOU FOR TELLING ME ALL THIS!

WE'RE REALLY ANGRY NOW!
THE CASTLE SAMURAI ARE OUR ENEMIES!
AND THEN THEY SAID
THAT TRYING TO KILL SHIZUNE-SAMA, THE SON OF GOD IS AN OUT-RAGE!
THE OTHERS SAID
.....
.....


WHAT DO YOU MAKE OF THIS, AZUMI?
THIS MAKES IT PERFECTLY CLEAR THAT
GENSAI AND THE OTHERS DIDN'T HAVE THE SLIGHTEST INTENTION TO LIVE QUIETLY FROM THE VERY START!!
THEY'RE GONNA START A WAR WITH THE CASTLE SAMURAI!
AND THEY'RE GONNA INVOLVE THE ENTIRE POPULATION!

THERE'S NO REASON TO HESITATE ANY MORE!
GENSAI AND THE OTHERS MAKE EIGHT. THERE ARE SIX OF THE RASETSUGARASU. THAT'S FOURTEEN IN ALL.
WE'VE GOTTA KILL THEM
RIGHT AWAY!

WHY ARE THEY DOING THIS?
HOWEVER.. WHY?
.....

THEY SHOULD KNOW ABOUT IT, BUT THEN...
IF THAT HAPPENS, THERE'LL BE NO CHANCE TO SURVIVE!
AND SEND A HUGE ARMY TO SUPPRESS IT.
IF THEY START SUCH A RECKLESS REVOLT, THE SHOGUNATE WILL HEAR OF IT
WHY ARE GENSAI-DONO AND THE OTHERS DOING IT?

DON'T YOU GET IT?
SO WHY!?
THEY'VE ALREADY GOTTEN THEIR AUTHORITY OVER THIS FIEF...

LIKE I VAGUELY UNDERSTAND.
I... FEEL
NO, I DON'T!

WHAT IS IT, THEN!? TELL ME!
EHH!?

.....

HUH!?
THEY DON'T FEEL ALIVE THERE.
IS JUST EXASPERATING.
A PEACEFUL SOCIETY
TO THEM
IN OTHER WORDS,

IN THOSE MOMENTS
TO STEAL THE LIFE OF ANOTHER...
TO KILL AND BE KILLED,
ON THE BATTLE-FIELD.

THEIR HEARTS RACE AND THEIR BLOOD PUMPS HOT ALL THROUGH THEIR BODIES.
AND THEY FEEL ALIVE WITH ALL THEIR HEART AND SOUL!

WILL I LIVE? WILL I DIE?
THAT FEAR PIERCING THROUGH YOUR BODY
EXCITES YOU COMPLETELY.

AZUMI, YOU SHOULD GET IT, RIGHT!?

SOME-HOW...
IT'S SUCH A THRILL...

HUH!?
.....

WHEN WITH YOUR STRENGTH, YOU KILL ONE PERSON AFTER ANOTHER.

AND YOU FEEL A SENSE OF FULFILLMENT AND BLISS!
YOUR BLOOD RUNS HOT THROUGHOUT YOUR BODY
INTOXICATED BY YOUR OWN STRENGTH,

I NEVER FEEL PLEASURE AT THAT AT ALL!

IS IT REALLY TRUE?

THE MOMENTS WHEN YOU FEEL
THAT YOU'RE AT YOUR BEST, THAT YOU'RE ALIVE IN THIS WORLD!
THAT'S WHAT EXCITES YOU THE MOST!
WHEN YOU KILL PEOPLE WITH THAT INCREDIBLE BUJUTSU OF YOURS!
AM I WRONG?

.....
.....

.....

YES YOU ARE!!

.....

SORRY.
DID I ANGER YOU?
.....

IN THE BATTLE-FIELD
HAVE BEEN BEWITCHED BY THAT SICK PLEASURE
GENSAI AND THE OTHERS
I FIGURE THAT
ANY-WAYS...

THEY'RE CERTAINLY MEN WHO FIND THEIR REASON TO LIVE AND A SENSE OF FULLFILLMENT ONLY ON THE BATTLEFIELD!!
FOR THEM BEING AT PEACE IS THE SAME AS BEING DEAD.

I'VE SEEN MANY MEN LIKE THAT.
.....
23
THERE IS NO MISTAKING IT
GENSAI AND HIS MEN HAVE NO INTENTION OF SURVIVING THIS!
DREAMING OF A MORE GLORIOUS BATTLEFIELD,
THEY'LL GO BERSERK IN THIS LITTLE FIEF.
THEN THEY'LL PROCEED TO INVADING EXTERNALLY!

THEY WISH
TO DIE A SPECTACULAR DEATH
AMIDST GUNPOWDER AND SPRAYS OF BLOOD!
AS IF THEY WERE IN A TRANCE!
I'M SURE OF IT!
.....

YOU GET IT?
WE HAVE TO SLAY THOSE FOURTEEN RIGHT AWAY! TODAY, EVEN!
AZUMI!!!

IF YOU'RE STILL HESITANT, REMEMBER THAT THE POPULATION WHO YOU SHOULD PROTECT AND THE CASTLE SAMURAI ARE BEING MANIPULATED BY THE RÔNIN.
THEY'RE GOING TO MAKE THEM KILL EACHOTHER!
IN ORDER TO FULLFIL THE MISSION, TENKAI-SAMA ENTRUSTED TO YOU..
WE'VE GOTTA KILL 'EM ALL RIGHT NOW!
THAT'S THE RIGHT COURSE OF ACTION!

.....
.....

IS THAT NOT THE CASE?
AM I WRONG?

THEN WE SHOULD SNEAK IN WHEN THE DARKNESS FAVORS US...
OKAY!

I'LL KILL THEM!
GOT IT!

!!.....
I'M GOING NOW!
NO.

AAAALRIGHT! LET'S GO TOGETHER!

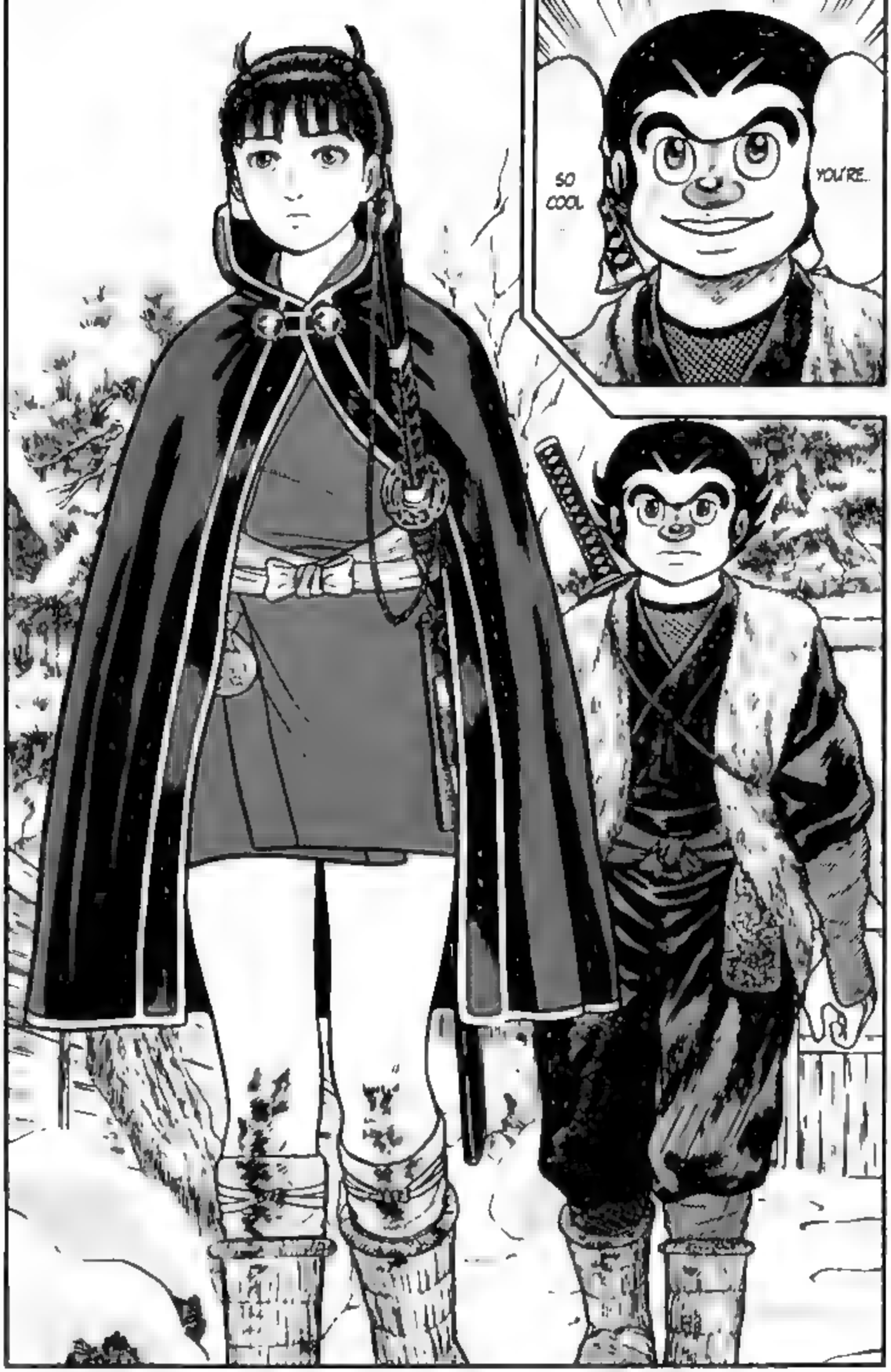
IN BROAD DAYLIGHT... WITH NO HESITATION...

I'M COUNTING YOU TO SECURE AN ESCAPE ROUTE AFTER I'VE FINISHED KILLING THEM.
I'LL KILL THEM ON MY OWN!
NO, TOBIZARU. YOU HAVE A WOUNDED SHOULDER.

.....
.....

MARCH INTO THE CASTLE IN BROAD DAYLIGHT WITH NO HESITATION AND CUT DOWN THOSE FOURTEEN WARRIORS...!? AZUMI.....
SO WHAT YOU'RE SAYING IS YOU'RE GONNA

.....
THAT'S RIGHT.


SO COOL...
YOU'RE...

CHAPTER 5: THROBBINGS

AZUMI-HIME, YA SAY?
YOU!?
DON'TCHA KNOW HER, IDIOT!?
SORRY FER HIS RUDE-NESS!
YEP, GENSAI-DONO'N THE OTHERS'RE ALL IN!

2

I'LL KILL THEM.
THERE ARE FOURTEEN OF THEM, COUNTING GENSAI'S MEN AND THE RASETSU-GARASU.

THERE THEY ARE!

AND THE SIX RASETSUGARASU ARE THERE AS WELL...
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AND HAVING LUNCH...
EVERYONE IS THERE!
GENSAI AS WELL...

AT THE SAME TIME!?
CAN I CUT DOWN ALL OF THEM
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COMPLETING MY MISSION MEANS TO KILL THEM ALL!
IT'S NOW OR NEVER! GRAMPA, EVERYONE... GIVE ME STRENGTH!
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ALR-
IGHT!
SHUN-
JIRŌ-
DONO!
5
SHUNJIRŌ-
DONO IS...
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ドクッ

IT'S AZUMI!!
HEY!
6
.....
STATE YOUR BUSIN-ESS!
IS SHE ALONE?
PLEASE! WAIT JUST A MINUTE!

EVERYONE, JUST PLEASE ENJOY YOUR MEALS!
SHE'S SURELY COME TO TALK WITH ME!

TOGETHER WITH GENSAI AND THE OTHERS...
I DIDN'T THINK YOU'D BE HERE, SHUNJIRŌ-DONO!

WHAT'S WRONG!? AZUMI-SAN...WHY DID YOU COME TO THE CASTLE!?

WHAA AAT!?
I AM.
GENSAI-DONO AND THE OTHERS!?
YOU'RE HERE T-TO KILL...

WH-WHAT NONSENSE ARE YOU...
INVOLVING THE OTHER RŌNIN AND THE PEOPLE HERE.
GENSAI-DONO AND HIS MEN ARE TRYING TO START A WAR WITH THE CASTLE SAMURAI
THE CREATION OF A SYSTEM FOR AN IDEAL COUNTRY!
GENSAI-DONO AND HIS MEN ARE WORKING WITH ME TO ACCOMPLISH
LET ME EXPLAIN EVERYTHING!
H-HERE IS A BIT...
A MISUND-ERSTANDING!
THERE MUST BE SOME MISTAKE!
WHO WOULD START A WAR!?

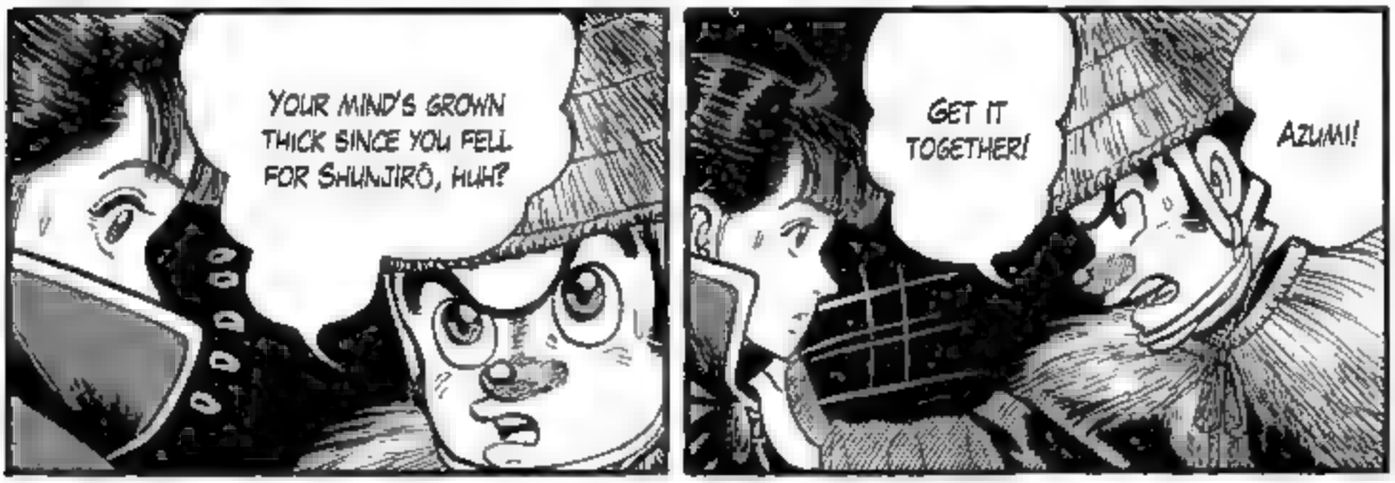
WORKING TOWARD MAKING THE IDEAL COUNTRY I DREAM OF A REALITY!
PEACEFULLY AND HARM-ONIOUSLY
BOTH PARTIES ARE SURELY
FWEEEEE
.....
I'LL BE BACK SOON!
I'M SORRY, WAIT HERE A MOMENT!
EXPLAIN!
JUST WHAT THE HECK HAPPENED, AZUMI!?

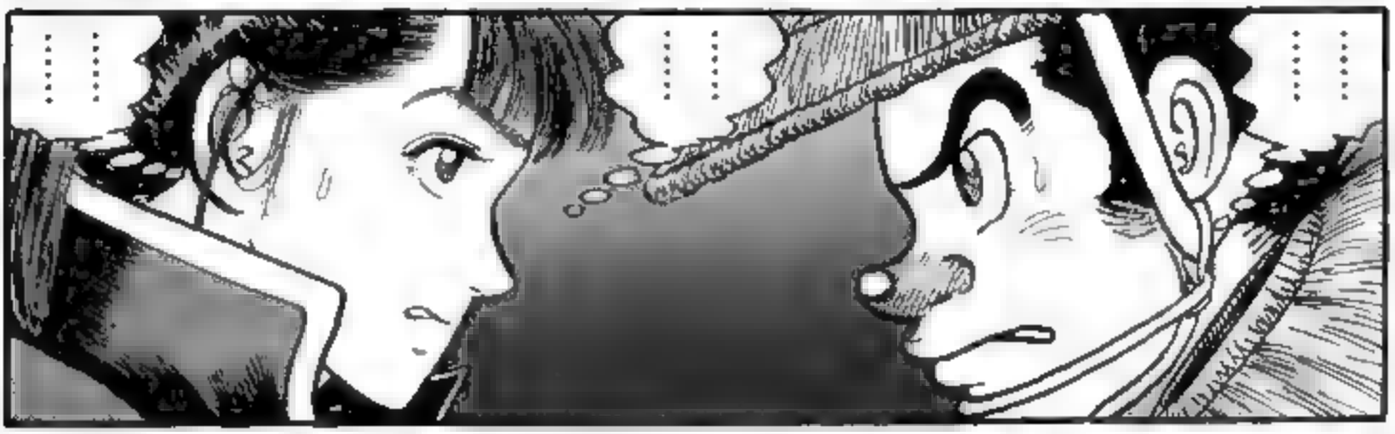
DID YOU ALSO TELL HIM ABOUT YESTERDAY'S FARCE OF THOSE GUYS ASSAULTING SHIZUNE-SAMA!?
SHUNJIRŌ-DONO SAYS IT'S ALL A MISUNDERSTANDING AND THERE'LL BE NO WAR AT ALL!
.....

WE HAVE NO DECISIVE, CLEAR EVIDENCE EITHER WAY!
ARE THEY REALLY WHAT WE THINK THEY ARE, OR IS SHUNJIRŌ-DONO THE ONE WHO'S RIGHT?
BUT... ABOUT GENSAI AND THE OTHERS' TRUE FEELINGS,
IT'S NOT THAT I GAVE UP ON KILLING THEM...

WE'LL END UP DESTROYING ALL OF SHUNJIRŌ-DONO'S HARD-WON HOPES AND DREAMS!
IF WE MISUNDERSTAND THE SITUATION,

IS THAT REALLY...
HOW IS IT NOT OBVIOUS THAT THEY'RE MANIPULATING AND USING SHUNJIRŌ!?


YOUR MIND'S GROWN THICK SINCE YOU FELL FOR SHUNJIRŌ, HUH?
GET IT TOGETHER!
AZUMI!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YOU FOOL! IT'LL BE TOO LATE BY THEN!
UNTIL WE HAVE CLEAR PROOF!
A LITTLE... LET'S JUST WAIT A LITTLE MORE!

WHAT'S GOTTEN INTO YOU, AZUMI...?

SHOULD LIEMON AND I GO AND CALL HIM BACK!?
NOT GOOD. WE SHOULD HURRY...
BUT IT SEEMS HE'S NOT COMING BACK.
SINCE SHUNJIRŌ CAN STILL PROVE USEFUL TO US...I HAD INVITED HIM HERE TO SECURE HIS ASSISTANCE QUICKLY...

OHHH, THAT'LL BE FUN!
THAT BEING THE CASE, MIND BRINGING HER AS WELL?
HE'S WITH AZUMI.

CAN YOU STEAL AZUMI'S SWORD, BIND HER AND DRAG HER BACK HERE?
HEY, BIG MAN! IF THE OPPORTUNITY PRESENTS ITSELF FOR YOUR SUPERHUMAN STRENGTH...

WON'T RAPING HER ALL TOGETHER BE FUN? WHAT SAY YOU ALL?
WE'LL HAVE SUCH AN AMUSING FEAST BEFORE US TO LAST ALL NIGHT!
THAT AZUMI IS SUCH A GRACEFUL WOMAN!
EHEHEHEHE! SOUNDS LIKE FUN!

THIS IS GONNA BE FUN!
WE'LL BRING HER BACK FOR SURE!
RIGHT!?
LEAVE HER TO US.
OH, THIS WILL BE VERY PLEASANT

HOH! HOOOHO! WAIT FOR US!

DID THEY GO TO THE GOLD MINE!?
OR MAYBE TO AZUMI'S HOUSE!?
HMM!?

HEY, TŌDŌ AND SAGAWA ARE FOLLOWING US...

WE'RE NOT GONNA KILL HER! WE'RE JUST GONNA CAPTURE HER, Y'KNOW!
WE'RE COMING, TOO!

IT COULD EVEN TURN INTO A SWORD FIGHT, YOU KNOW!
ARE YOU SAYING LIEMON WOULDN'T BE ABLE TO CAPTURE HER!?
BECAUSE AZUMI CONSIDERS US ENEMIES, IT'S POSSIBLE THAT SHE WON'T GIVE YOU AN OPPORTUNITY AT ALL.

IN THAT CASE, LEAVE HER TO US!

IT WILL ALREADY BE TOO LATE!

AZUMI'S NO GOOD!!...AT THIS RATE, SHE'S GONNA BE PERSUADED BY SHUNJIRŌ...

!!

HAS THE SITUATION BECOME SO UNMANAGEABLE?
A SHINOBI IN BROAD DAYLIGHT? THAT'S NO GOOD...
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THEY'RE OVER THERE!
I'VE FOUND SHUNJIRŌ AND AZUMI!
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THERE AREN'T EVEN ANY CHILDREN PLAYING OUTSIDE.
BUT YOU DON'T SEE ANY PEOPLE AT ALL.
IT'S TRUE THAT FARMING ISN'T FEASIBLE IN THE SNOW...
IT'S BEEN BOTHERING ME FOR SOME TIME NOW.

DID YOU ALSO HEAR IT!?
HUH!?
SO IT WOULD SEEM..
WEL, IT DIDN'T GROW INTO A SERIOUS ISSUE..
DURING THIS MORNING'S MEETING, IT SEEMS THAT SOME CASTLE SAMURAI TRIED TO ATTACK SHIZUNE-SAMA.

THAT'S WHY THEY'RE ALL OUT!
SHIZUNE-SAMA, AFTER HE PERSUADED THEM ALL TO CALM DOWN, BEGAN THE MEETING AGAIN.
AND THEY WERE SO INCENSED..
THEN, BECAUSE THE VILLAGERS WANTED TO RETALIATE AGAINST THE CASTLE SAMURAI
I'M SO GLAD!
OH, REALLY!?

IF SHIZUNE-SAMA CONVINCES THEM FOR THE MOMENT...EVEN GENSAI AND HIS MEN WON'T BE ABLE TO CAUSE A REVOLT...
THAT THE POPULATION HERE IS GOING TO GET CAUGHT UP IN...

SO PLEASE REST ASSURED!
A TROUBLESOME REVOLT OR SOMETHING LIKE THAT...WON'T EVER HAPPEN IN THIS COUNTRY!!

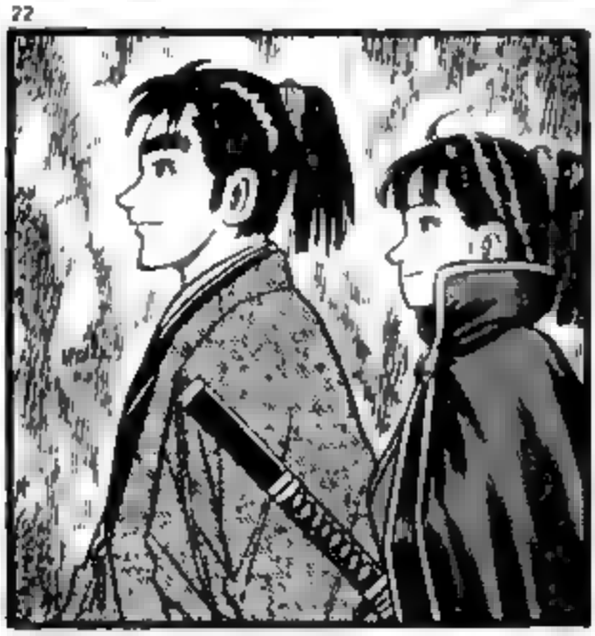
YOU MUST BE TIRED, RIGHT!?
YOU'VE BEEN SEARCHING, INVESTIGATING, RUNNING ABOUT EVERY DAY..
SINCE YOU CAME TO THIS COUNTRY,

IN THIS LAND RICH IN GOLD VEINS, THERE'RE ALSO A LOT OF NICE HOT SPRINGS.
……
……

THERE'S A SECRET HOTSPRING! THAT'S THE BEST OF ALL!
AND THE TRUTH IS...
AHHH...
HAD AN AMAZING REGENERATIVE AND HEALING EFFECT ON THE WOUND ON MY CHEST THAT SAKON GAVE ME!
HOT SPRINGS

……
LET'S GO!
A DIP IN THERE WILL TAKE AWAY ALL THE FATIGUE YOU'VE PILED UP TODAY!
DO YOU WANNA GO!?

WE NEED TO TIE THE HORSES AND WALK FROM HERE.



.....

HERE IT IS.
OHHH, IT'S SO QUIET!

RIGHT!

LET'S TAKE OUR TIME!
SO..
THERE SHOULD ALREADY BE SOME TOWELS READY

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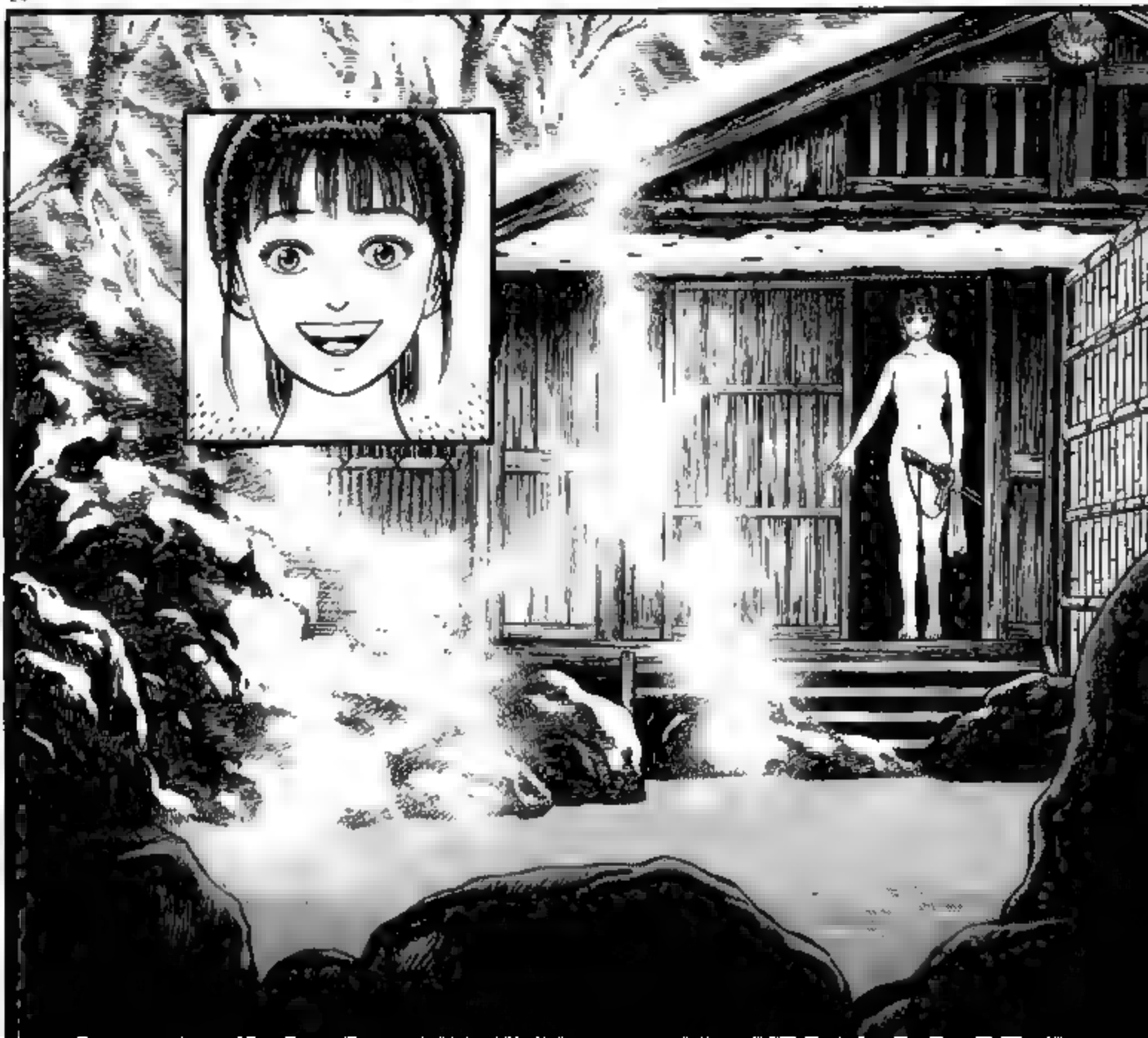

YOU CAN SEE A WATER-FALL!
AH!
WHAT A NICE PLACE THIS IS!

HOW IS IT!? NICE HOT-SPRINGS, RIGHT!?

WELL, YES! THE CHANGING ROOM IS SEPARATE, BUT...
IS THIS BAD!?
W-WAS THIS A MIXED BATH!?
SORRY...IN THIS LAND, THERE AREN'T ANY SEPARATE BATHS..
FOR MEN AND WOMEN.
I WAS JUST A BIT SURPRISED...
N-NO ...

I SEE...
IT'S QUITE CASUAL..
AT THE GOLD MINE WORK MEN, WOMEN, EVEN MARRIED COUPLES...THERE'S A BIG HOT-SPRING SO EVERYONE JOINS IN TOGETHER

28

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……
ON THIS VERY DAY!!..
ON THIS VERY DAY,
WITH AZUMI-SAN I'M
GOING TO....!!
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ドッグ・
ドッグ

CHAPTER 6:
REVOLT

ON THIS VERY DAY...WITH AZUMI-SAN... I'M GOING TO
ON THIS VERY DAY!
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.....
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GO!!! I HAVE TO ACT!!!!
.....
!!
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SOME-ONE IS HERE

I...I...
A-AZUMI-SAN!

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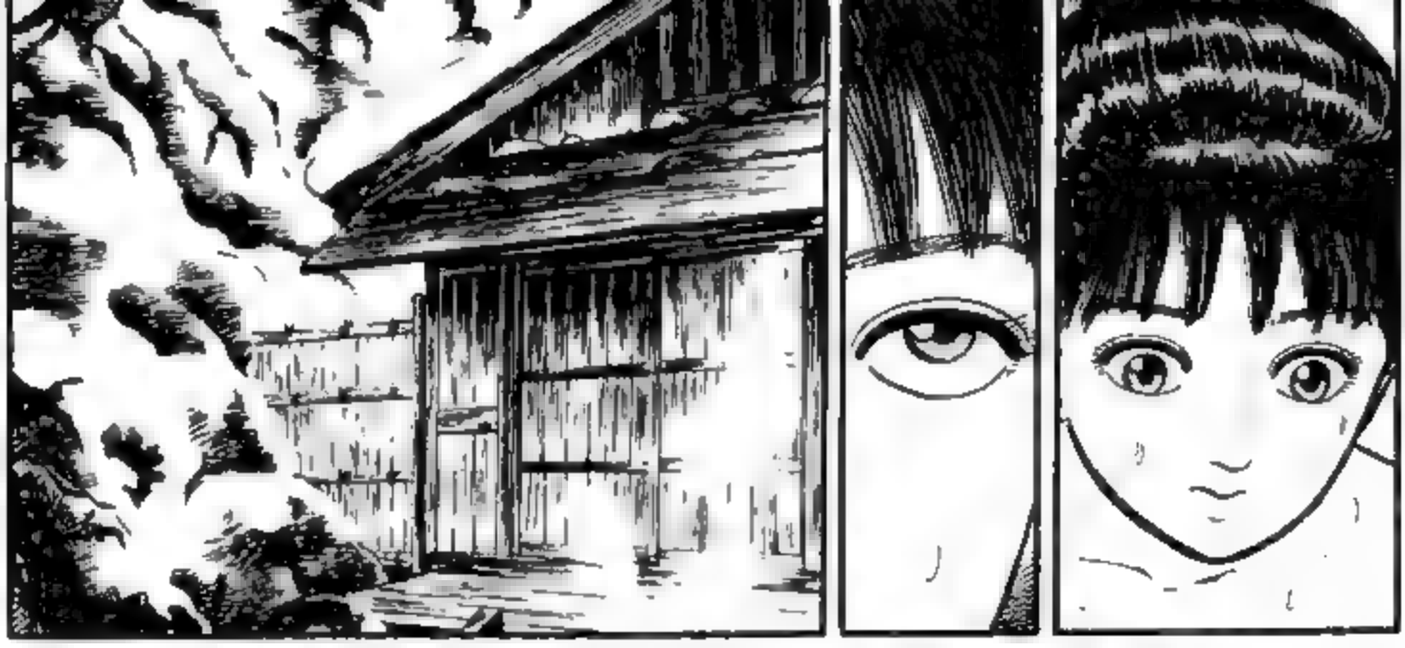
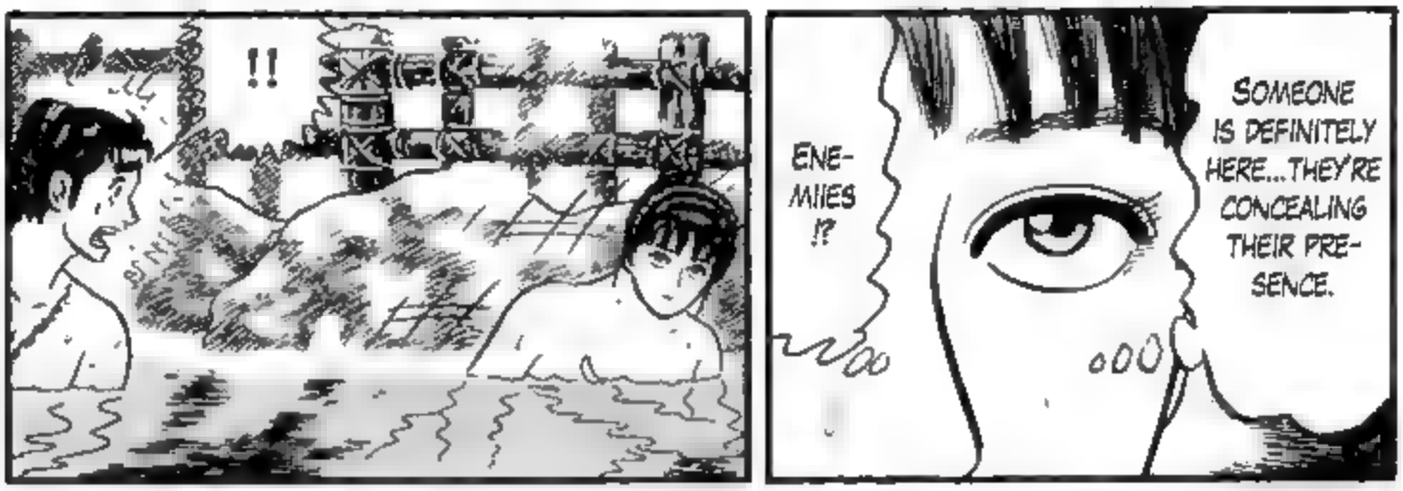
I LOVE YOU FROM THE BOTTOM OF MY HEART!

IT'S THE TRUTH!
.....




!!
ENE-MIIES !?
SOMEONE IS DEFINITELY HERE...THEY'RE CONCEALING THEIR PRE-SENCE.

W-WHY IS SHE GOING AWAY!?

AZUMI-SAN!!!

PLEASE! BECOME MY WIFE!!!

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WHAT
!?!?!

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WHAT IS WRONG WITH YOU, TŌDŌ-DONO!?
WHAT'S THE MEANING OF THIS, LIEMON-DONO!?

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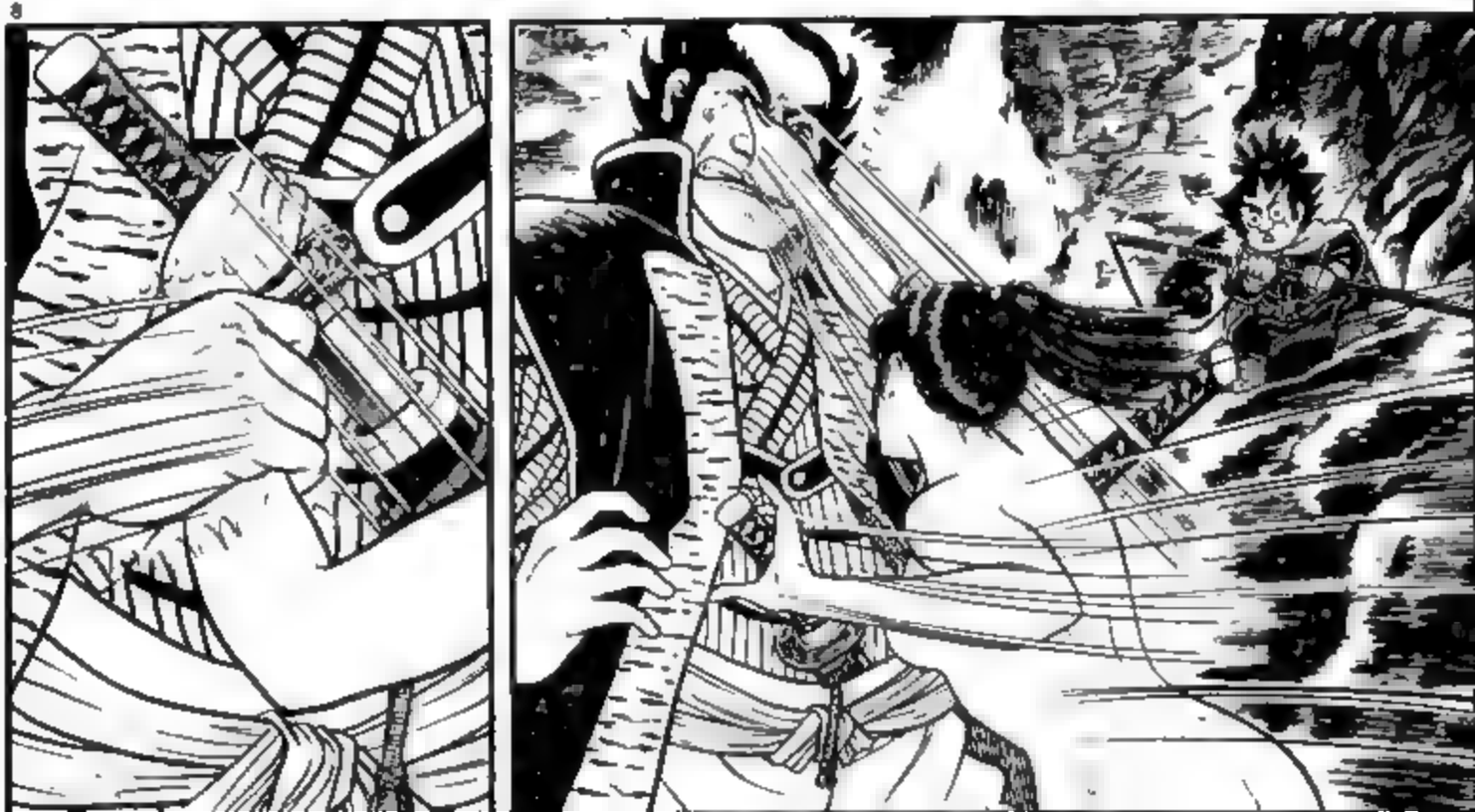
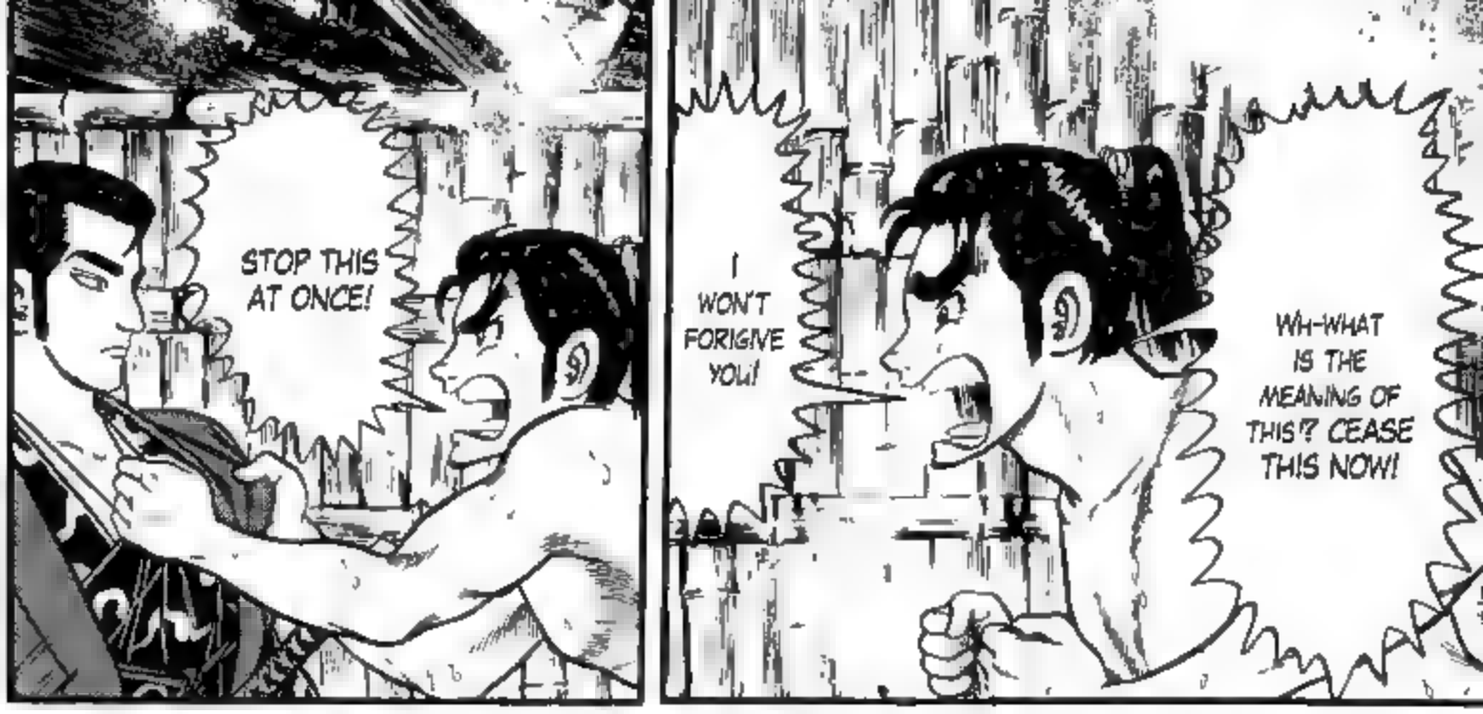
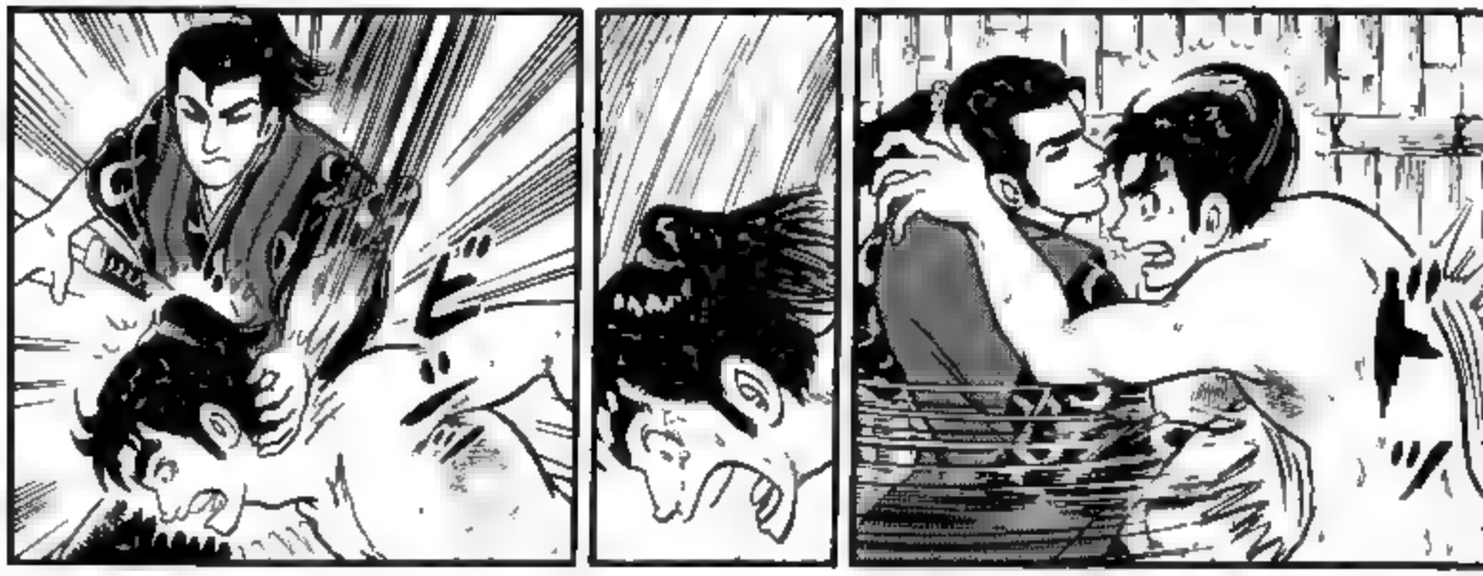


UURR
GGH
GH!!
GUOOO
OOOO
OOOO
OOOOO
OOOOO
OOOOH
!!!!!!!!

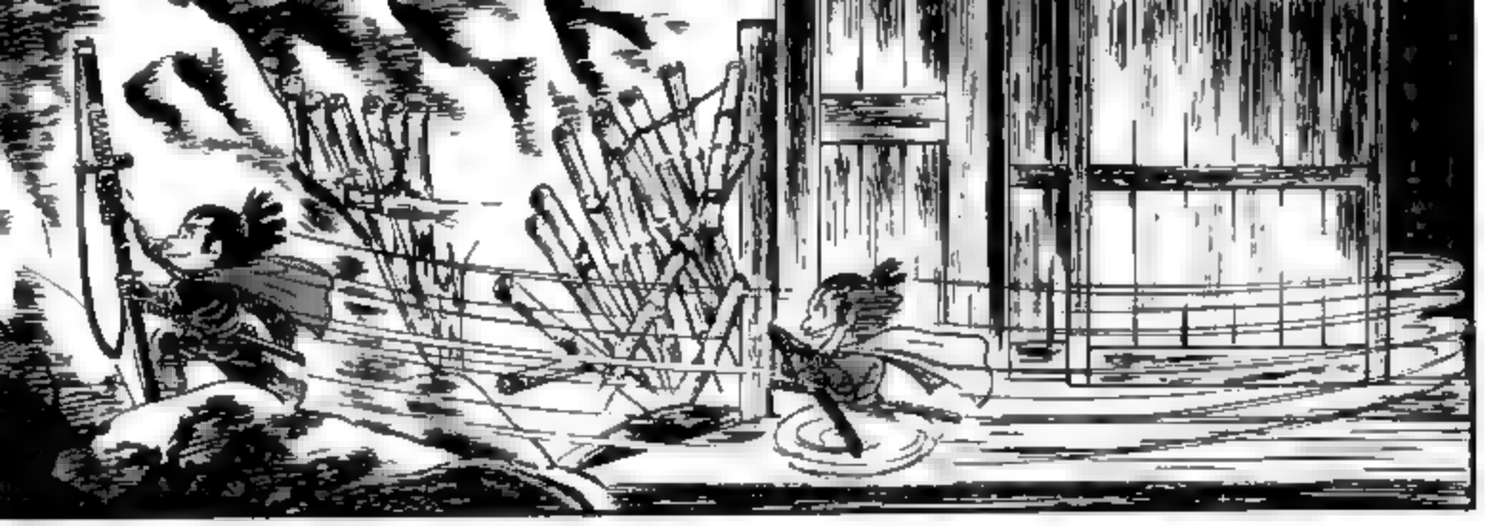
WE GOT HER!!!
GREAT!
OKAY!
ドダダ!!
ドダダ!!

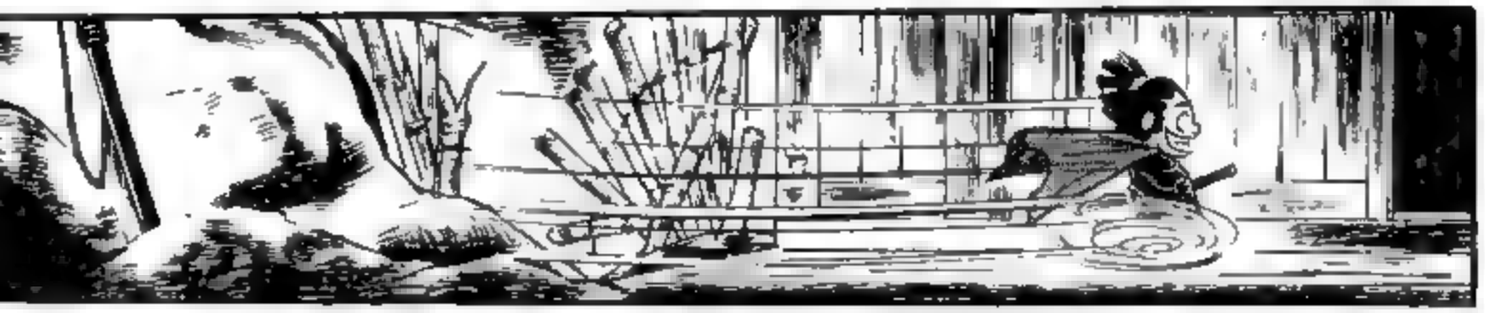
OHOHO!
KII!HEHEHE HEHEHHE! WHAT A BEAUTY!
UHOOO!!! I JUST CAN'T WAIT!

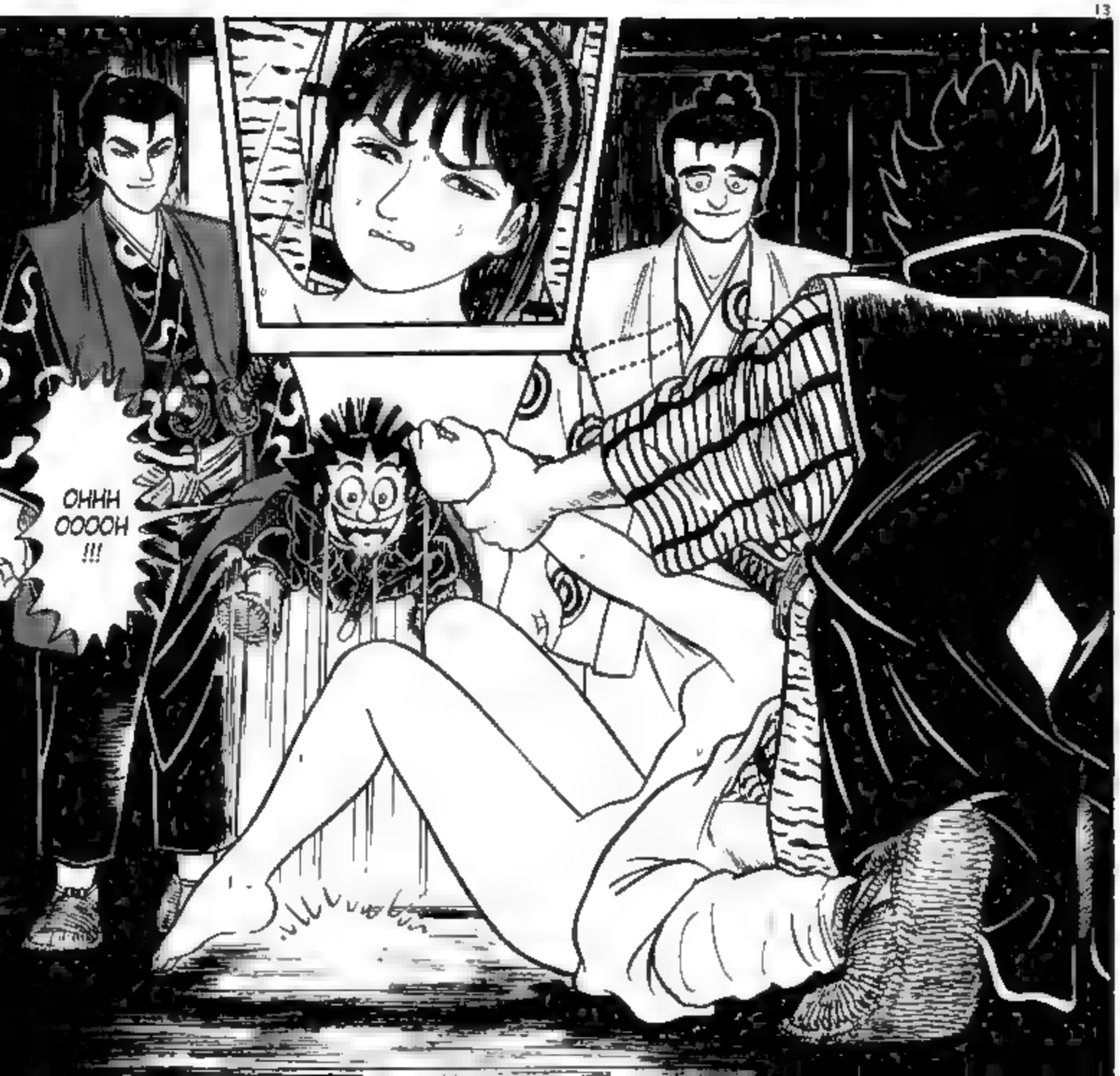

STOP THIS AT ONCE!
I WON'T FORIGIVE YOU!
WH-WHAT IS THE MEANING OF THIS!? CEASE THIS NOW!



LET'S DO HER BEFORE THE RASETSUGARASU AND THE OTHERS DO HER ALL TOGETHER!
LET'S DO HER FIRST!!






OHHH
OOOOH
!!!

YOU'RE ALL MINE!

SHIIIIIIT!!!!
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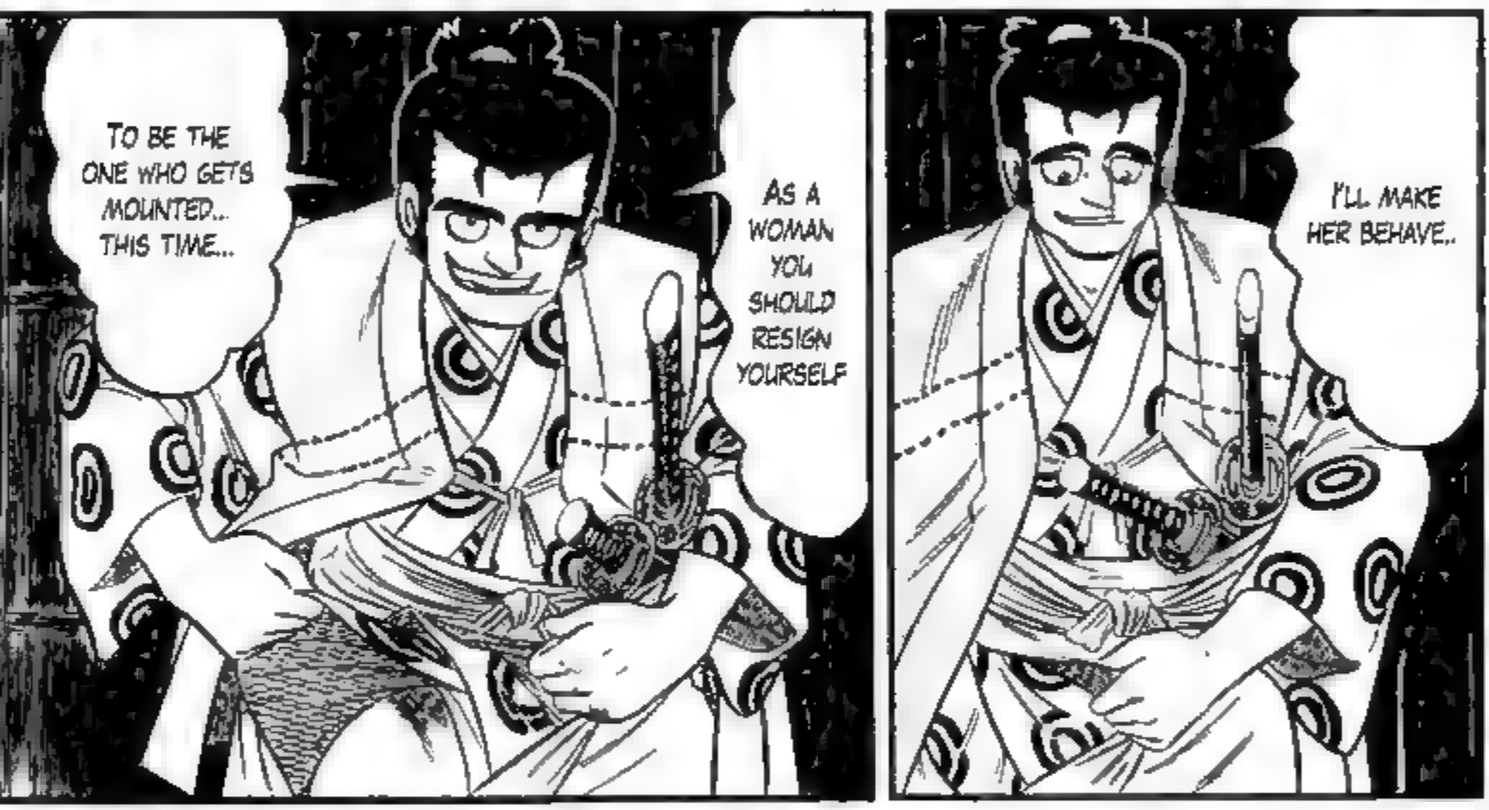
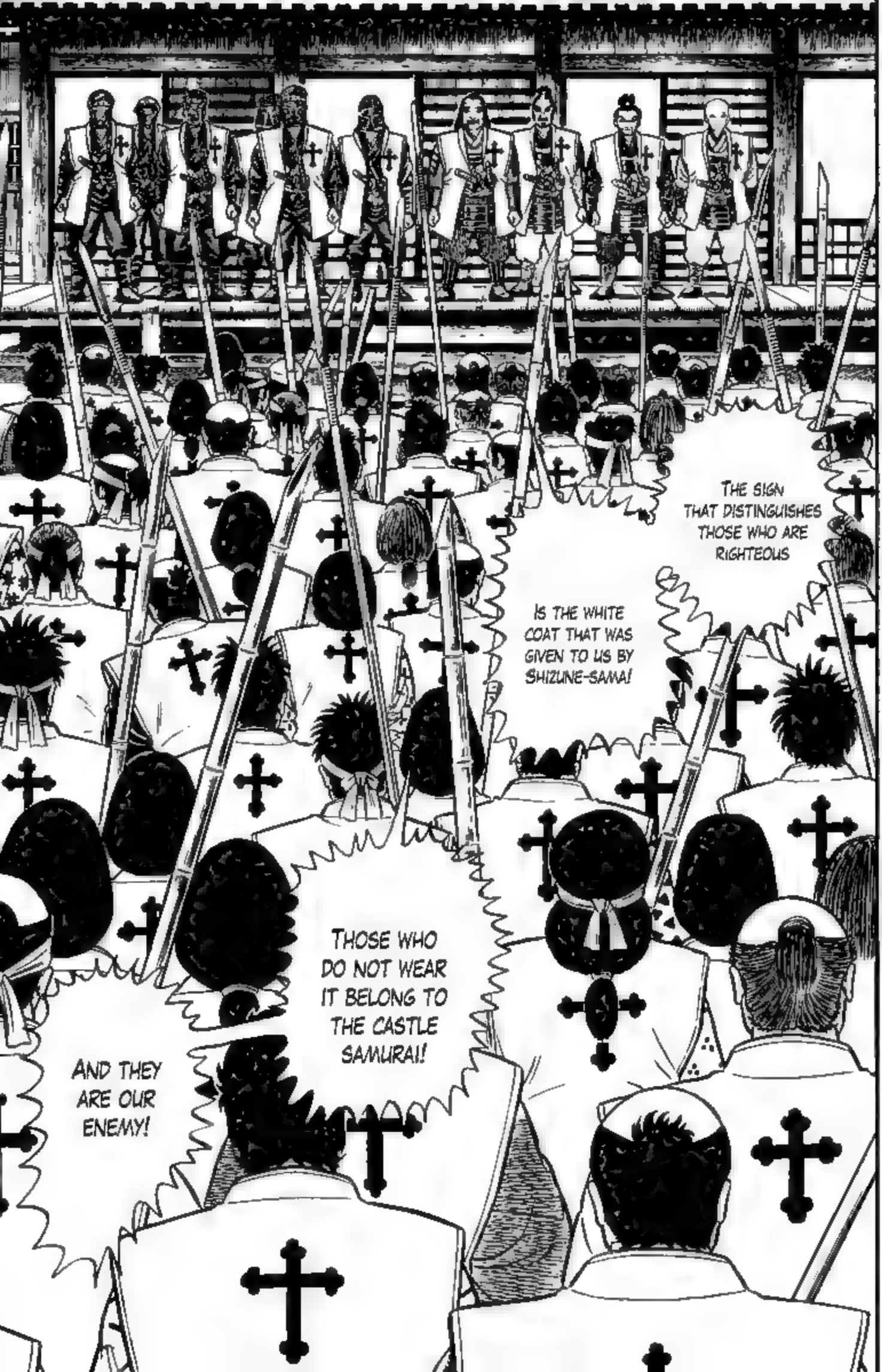
KURISUKE, YOU CAN DO HER ALL YOU LIKE LATER UNTIL YOU'RE SATISFIED!
DON'T GET IMPA-TIENT!


TO BE THE ONE WHO GETS MOUNTED... THIS TIME...
AS A WOMAN YOU SHOULD RESIGN YOURSELF
I'LL MAKE HER BEHAVE..

.....

ALREADY ACCEPTED IT, HAVE YA!?
HEY, HEY!


THE SIGN THAT DISTINGUISHES THOSE WHO ARE RIGHTEOUS
IS THE WHITE COAT THAT WAS GIVEN TO US BY SHIZUNE-SAMA!
THOSE WHO DO NOT WEAR IT BELONG TO THE CASTLE SAMURAI!
AND THEY ARE OUR ENEMY!

IS A JUST CONFLICT!
THIS BATTLE, ACCORDING TO THE TEACHINGS OF SHIZUNE-SAMA
THE RIGHTEOUS SHALL SURELY BE VICTORIOUS!
IT BEGINS BY SLAYING THE CASTLE SAMURAI WHO WOULD PREVENT IT!
THE IDEAL COUNTRY! THE REALIZATION OF GOD'S OWN NATION!
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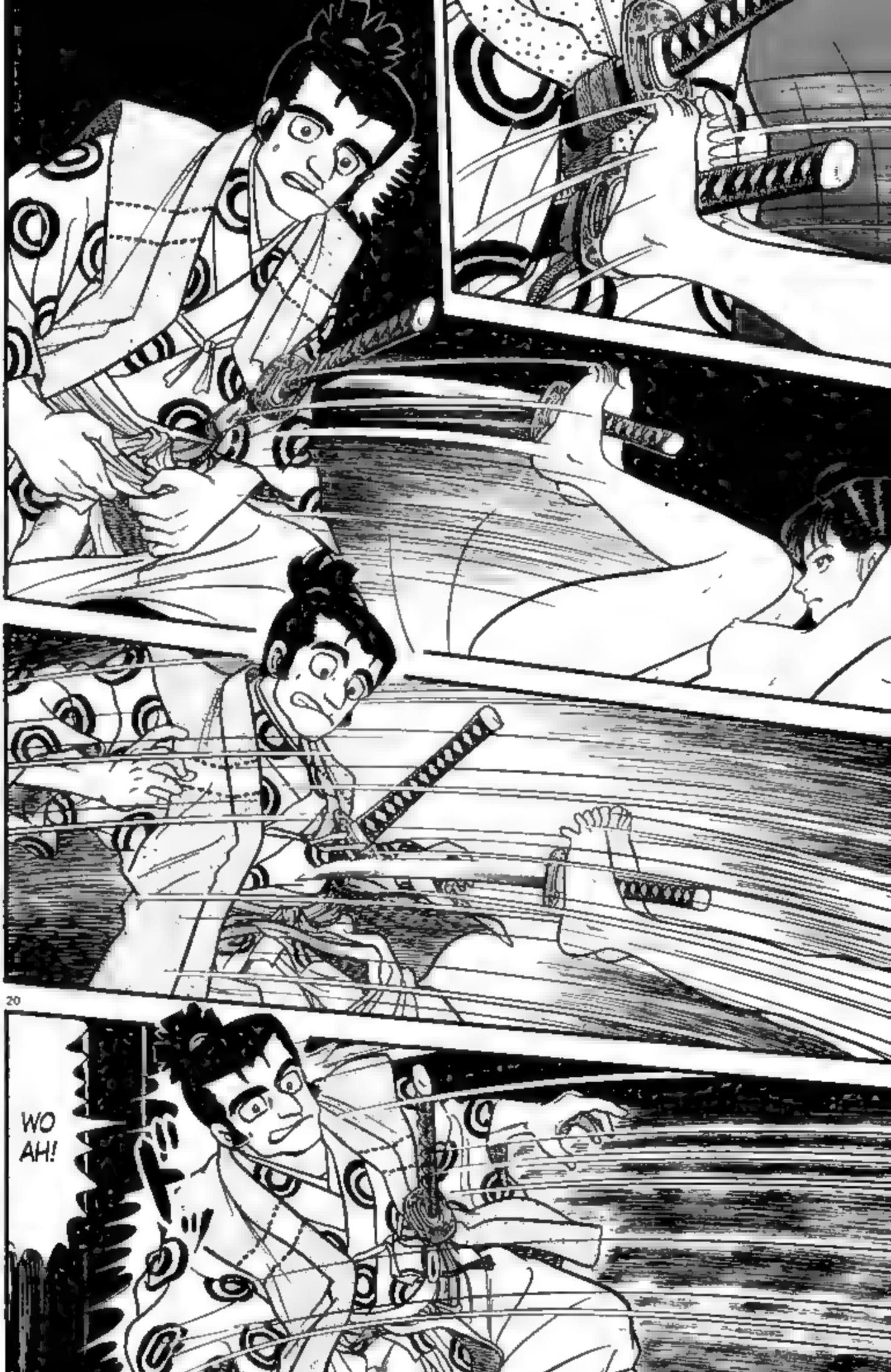
WO
AH!

THIS BITCH IS GOOD.
HEH HEH.
WHAT'RE YOU DOING!?
GRAB HER LEGS!

UGH!

UEEE
MOOOO
OOON!

LEAVE HER TO ME!

28
UGG
GGGH
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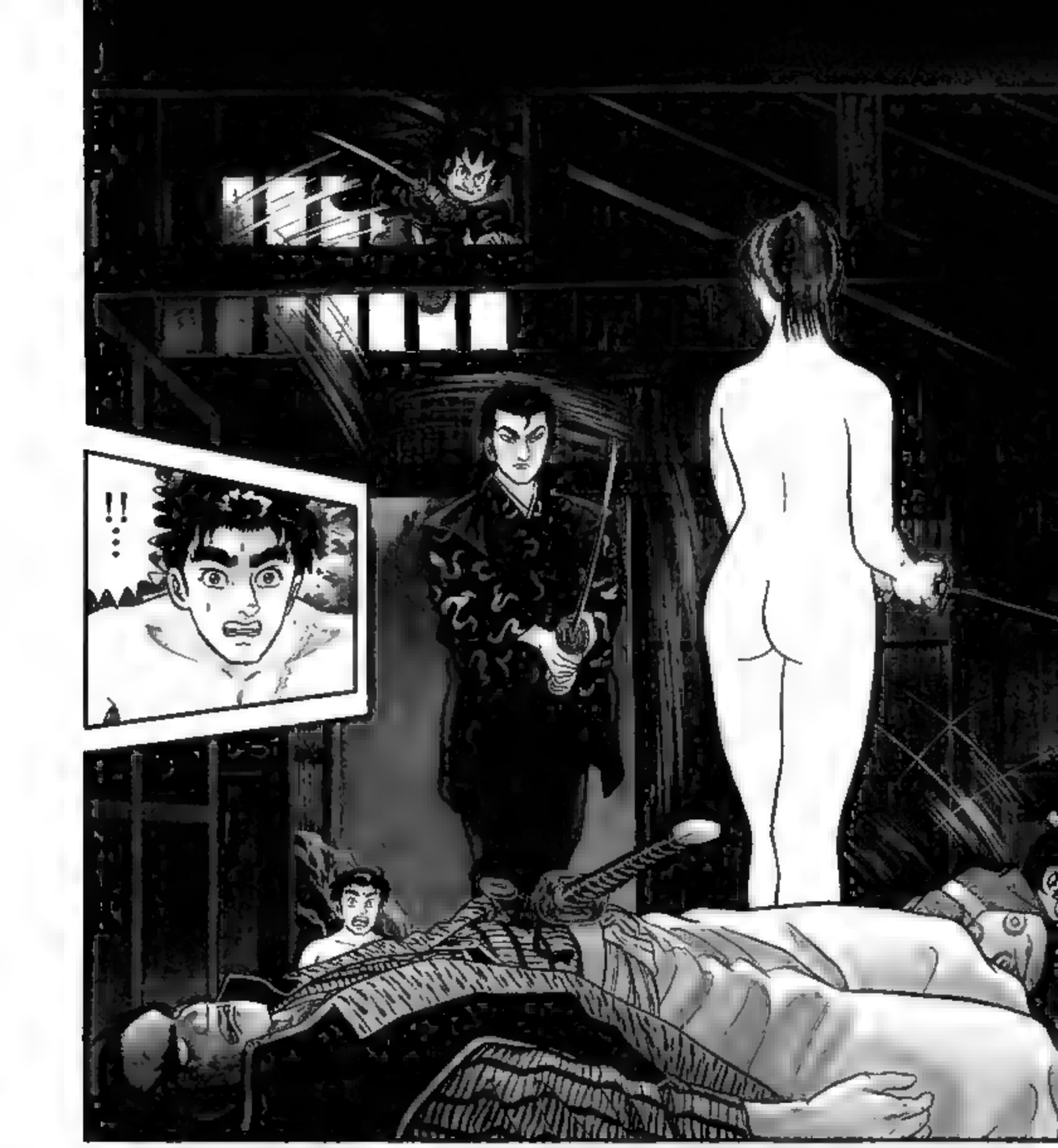
CHAPTER
7:
BLOODY
MAKEUP



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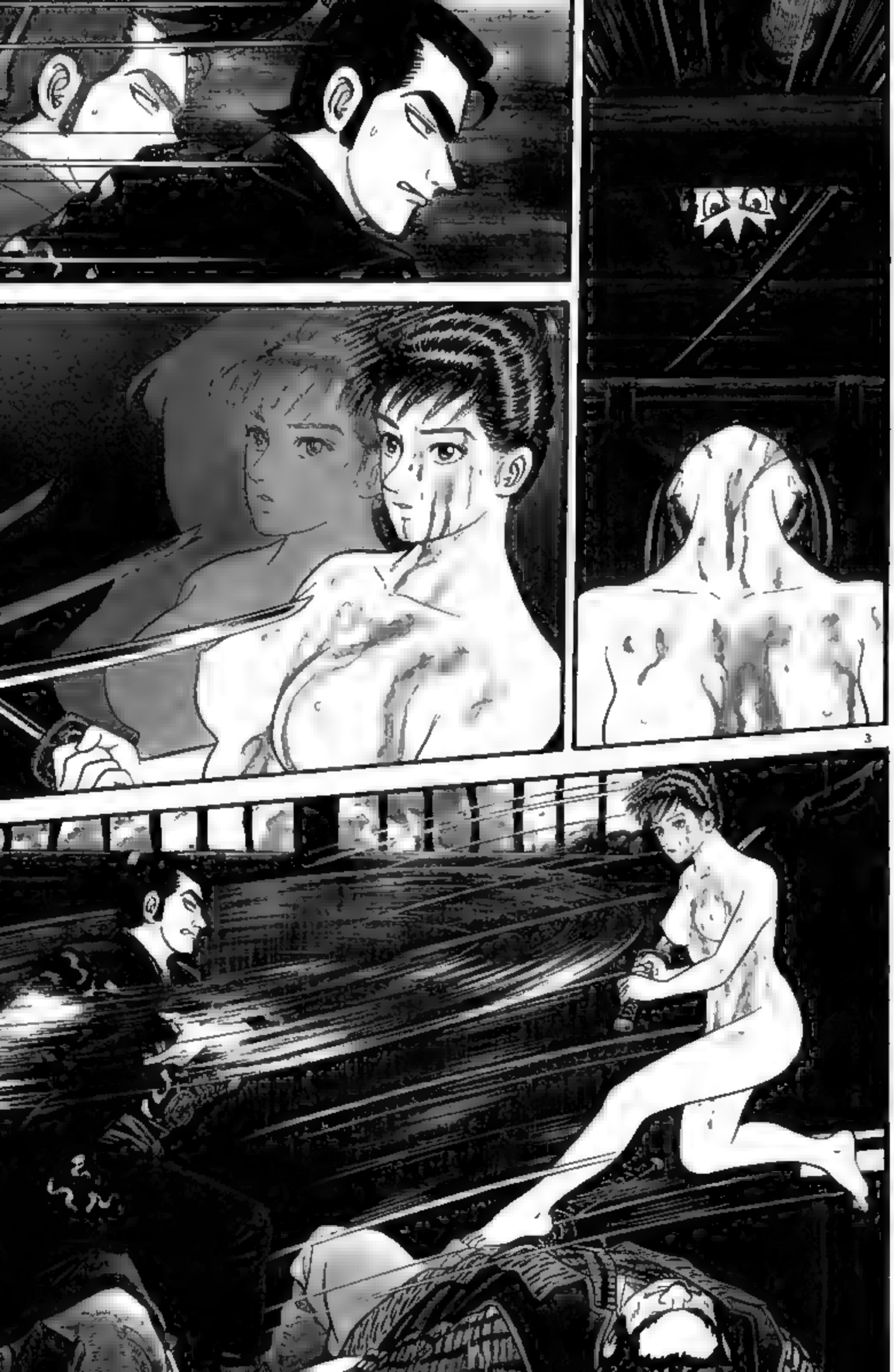

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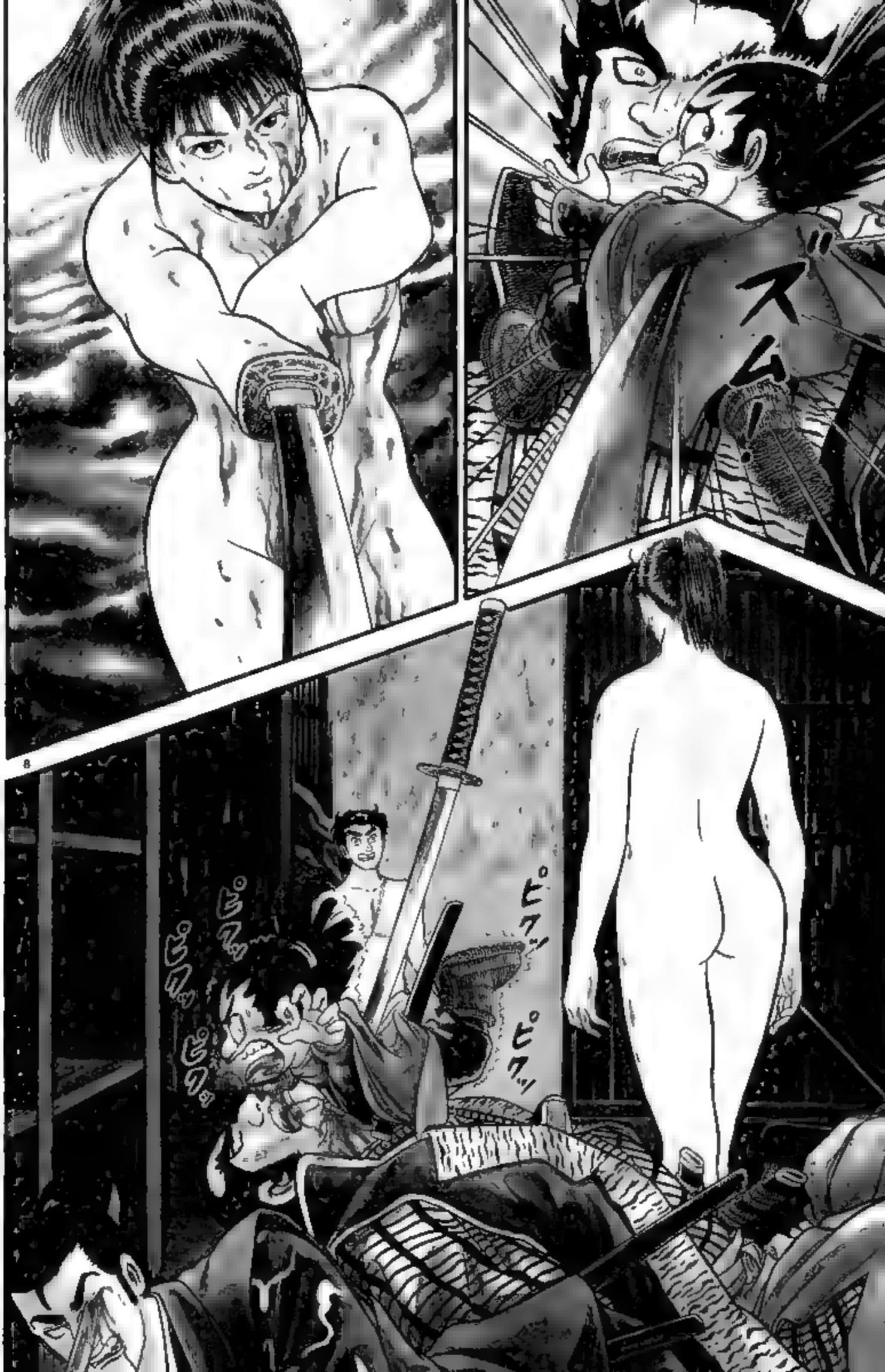
5

UEE
MOO
OON!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……

AH. RIGHT THERE.
WHERE IS MY KATANA?

SHUNIRŌ-DONO. WE OUGHT TO GET MOVING.

.....
.....
GENSAI AND THE OTHERS DO NOT HAVE THE SAME IDEAL OF A PERFECT COUNTRY THAT YOU DO.
YOU REALIZE IT NOW, RIGHT?

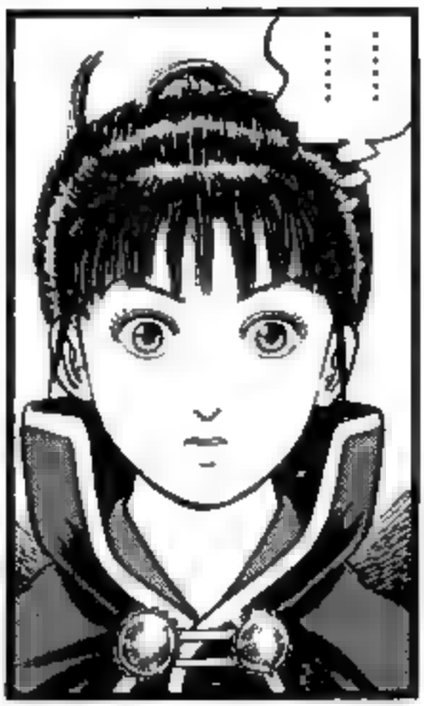
!!

!!.....
DAMMIT! THEY'VE ALREADY...

AAAAH!! OVER THERE THERE'RE TWO CASTLE SAMURAI NOT WEARING THE WHITE COATS!!

WAIT! THAT'S SHUNIRŌ-SAMA!
KILL 'EM!
OO OOO OOO OH!!

GENSAI-DONO AND HIS MEN... USED THEM AS A WAY TO TELL THE CASTLE SAMURAI FROM THE OTHERS?
THOSE ARE THE WHITE COATS SHIZUNE HAD MADE AND DISTRIBUTED TO EVERYONE DURING THE LAST MEETING...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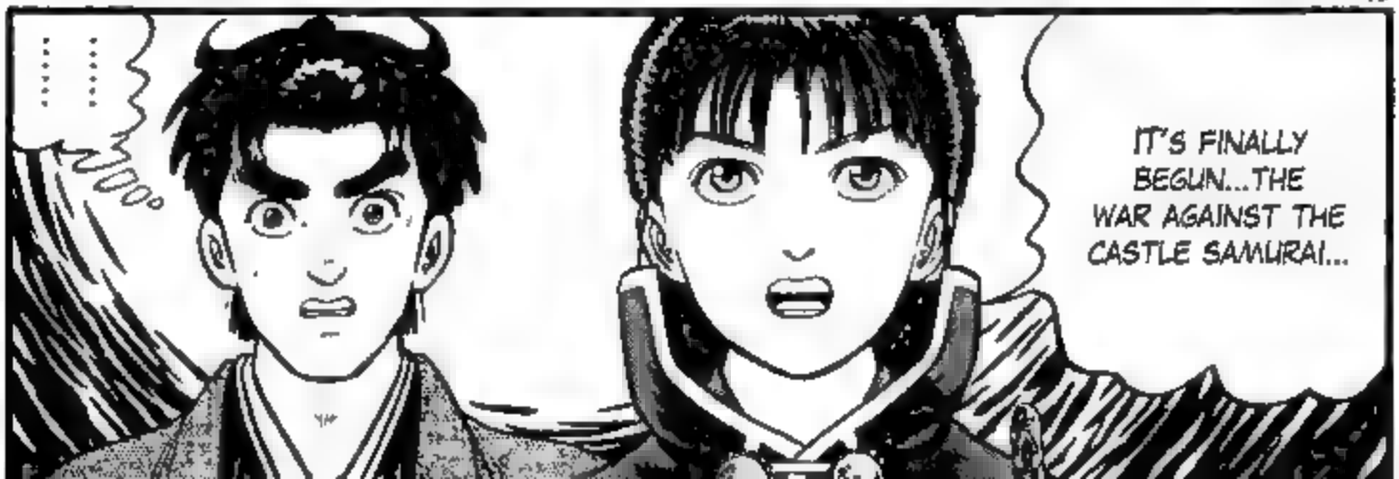

.....
IT'S FINALLY BEGUN...THE WAR AGAINST THE CASTLE SAMURAI...

S-SO THAT'S WHY I WAS SUMMONED TODAY!
AHH!
TO THE CAST-LE!
A-AZUMI-SAN. UNDER MY SURPERVISION A GREAT QUANTITY OF RIFLES AND GUNPOWDER WERE MADE AND PREPARED JUST IN CASE. THEY'RE AT THE GOLD MINE. THEY SHOULDN'T HAVE FALLEN INTO THEIR HANDS ALR...

LET'S HURRY TO THE GOLD MINE!
IT'S GRAVE NEWS IF THEY'VE BEEN STOLEN!

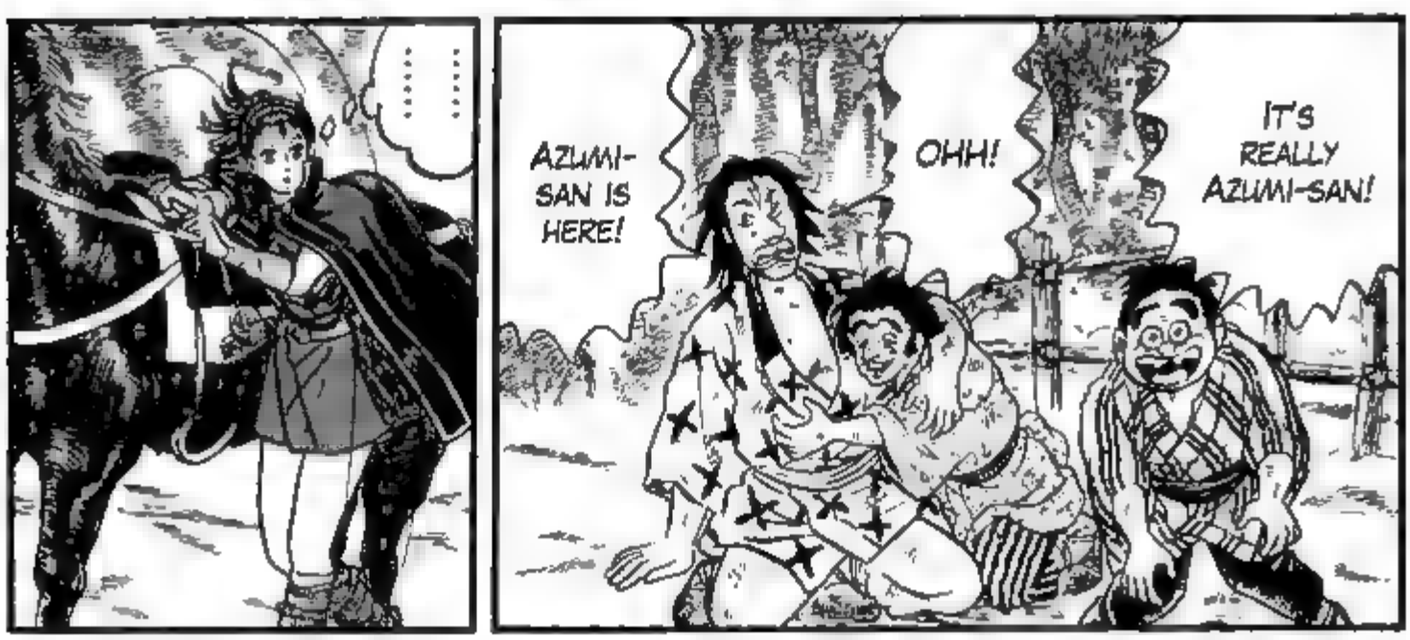
ドカカッ
ドカカッ
ドカカッ
I SHOULD HAVE KILLED THOSE FOURT-EEN THEN!
IT WAS JUST LIKE TOBIZARU SAID...

THIS WAY !!!

HAAA AAAAA AAAAH !!!!

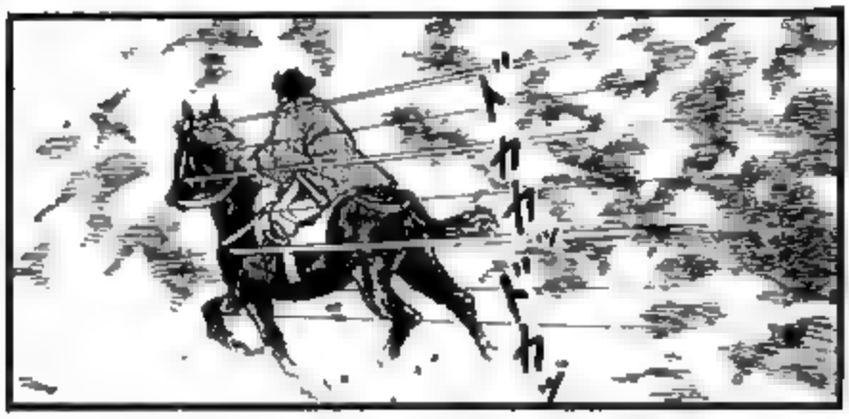
AZUMI-SAN! THIS WAY! HURRY!
!?……

IT'S AZUMI-SAN!
AHH!


……
AZUMI-SAN IS HERE!
OHH!
IT'S REALLY AZUMI-SAN!

JUST LIKE I THOUGHT! IT REALLY WAS YOU GUYS!

……
ARE THE OTHERS WITH YOU!?
YOU WERE WORKING IN THIS GOLD MINE!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AZUUUMI-SAAN!!!!
HUH?
COME IN! WE'LL BREATHE IT IN ALL TOGETHER!
IT'S THE BEST, Y'KNOW!

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ムグ
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!?……

WHAT IS... GOING ON HERE !?
UH!

HATSUNE-SAN AND KAGARI-DONO, TOO!?

WHY ARE YOU TWO HERE?

EH!?
THEY'VE ALREADY STOLEN THEM!?
WE CAME SO THAT GENSAI AND THE OTHERS DIDN'T STEAL THE RIFLES AND THE GUNPOWDER, BUT IT LOOKS LIKE WE WERE LATE...

SHUNJIRŌ-DONO MANAGES EVERYTHING IN THIS PLACE!
HOWEVER, SINCE IT'S NOT LIKELY THAT THOSE PEOPLE KNOW ABOUT ALL OF THE STORAGE PLACES, MAYBE...

LET'S FIND HIM!
ゴホ
ゴホ

HECK, THIS IS A MAZE...
THERE'S A PATH THIS WAY, TOO...
WHERE'S SHUNJIRŌ-DONO GONE TO!?

WHERE AAAAARE YOOOOU!?
SHUUUN-JIRŌ-DONOOO!

AN OPEN DOOR?
HUH !?
ガガ

UGH! WHAT A SMELL!
ポタッ

WHAT'S WITH THIS STENCH!?
IT LOOKS LIKE A JAIL...
WHY IS THERE A JAIL IN A GOLD MINE?
ポタッ
ポタッ

SOME-
ONE IS
HERE...
LET'S GET OUT OF HERE. THIS SMELL IS UN-BELIEVABLE! THEY'D NEVER HIDE THE RIFLES IN SUCH A PLACE!

IS THIS PRISONER THE SOURCE OF THE SMELL?
IS HE EVEN ALIVE?

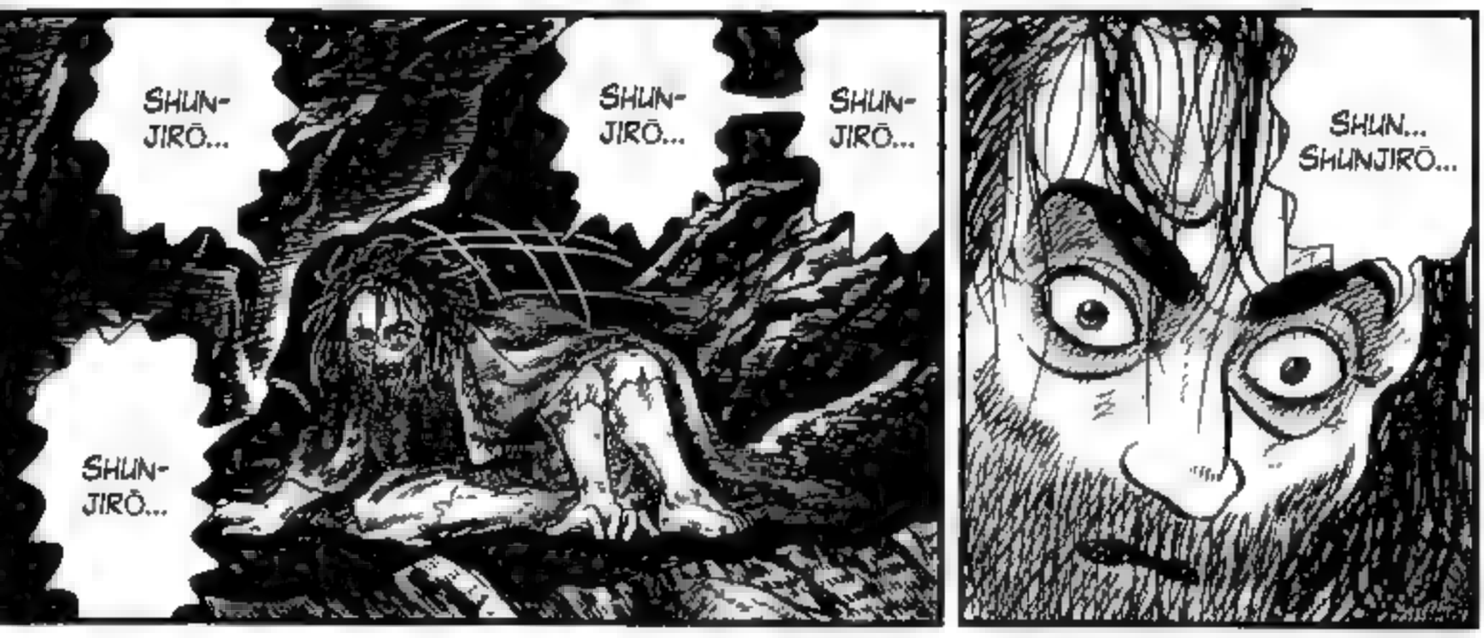
NO...NO WAY!!
!!

I'VE HEARD HIS NAME MANY TIMES BEFORE...
HUH!? THIS PRISONER!?
I...ISN'T THIS... KARASUMA TENZAN-DONO!?

IT'S ME! IT'S AZUMI!
KARA-SUMA TENZAN-DONO!

AHH! HE MOVED!

ビクッ
THAT'S WHAT SHUNIRŌ-DONO SAID!
WEREN'T YOU IN A SANITORIUM BECAUSE YOU OVERWORKED YOURSELF!?
TENZAN-DONO, WHY WERE YOU PUT IN SUCH A JAIL!?


SHUN-JIRŌ...
SHUN-JIRŌ...
SHUN-JIRŌ...
SHUN-JIRŌ...
SHUN... SHUNJIRŌ...

!!.....
SHUN JIRO OOŌ!
DAMN YOU! YOU DEM-ON!
OHH... OO OOH!

WHYYY !?
SHUN-JIROOO!
WHYYYY YYYYY YYYY!?
WHO PUT YOU INTO THIS JAIL!? WAS IT SHUNJIRŌ-DONO!?
DO YOU REALLY THINK WE'RE THE TYPE OF PEOPLE TO TALK ABOUT THIS LAND'S SECRETS!?
JUST BECAUSE WE'LL TRAVEL TO OTHER LANDS,
EVERYONE DOESN'T WANT TO STAY IN JUST ONE PLACE FOREVER! WE'RE FELLOWS MET ALONG THE ROAD AFTER ALL!!
LET US GO!!
LET US GOOOOO!

HAVE YOU DONE TO EVERYONE! TO MY FRIENDS!?
WHAT
WHAT HAVE YOU DONE?!
WHAT!?
WHA!?
WHA!?

DAMN YOU! SHUNJIROO OOOOOOO OOOOO!
DAMN YOO OOO OOO OOO OOU !!!
AHH HHHH HHH HH!
AHH!

YOU GODDAMN DEMOOOOO OOOOO OOOOO OOOOO OOOON!!
DAMN DEMOO OOOOO OOOOO OOOOO OOOO OOON!

.....

THE FELLOWS MET ALOONG THE ROAD!?
WHAT... WHAT DID SHUNJIRŌ DO TO...

EH!?

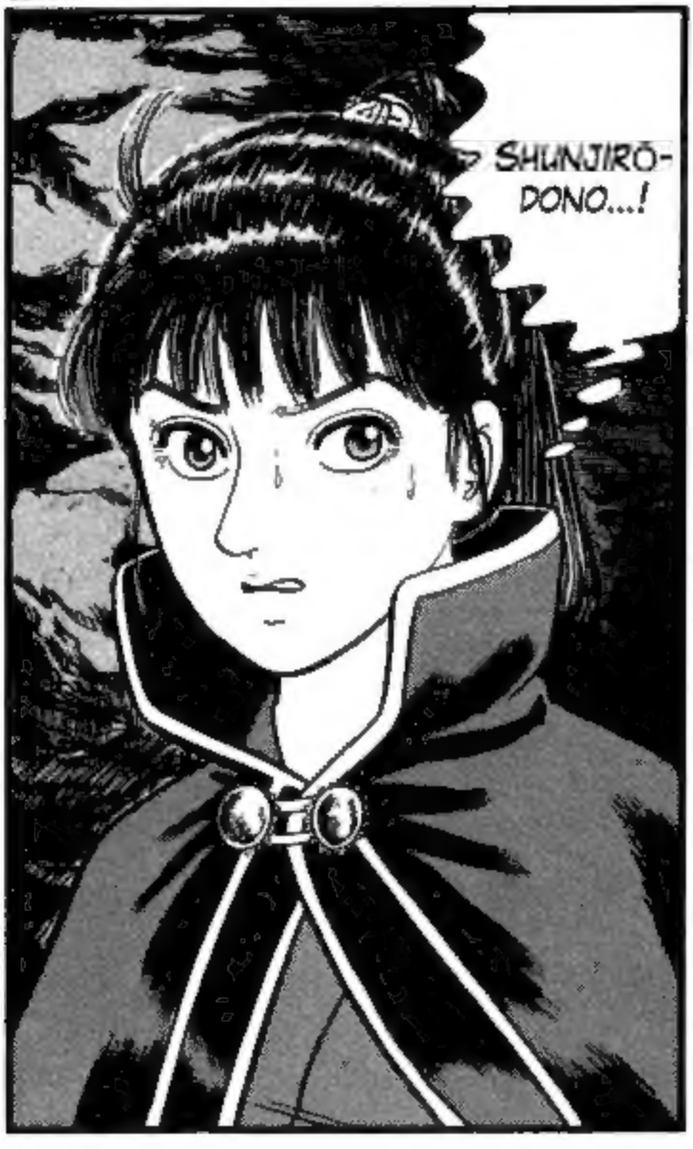
PERHAPS... WELL I WONDER IF IT'S REALLY ABOUT THOSE PEOPLE...

SHUNJIRŌ ASKED US TO... DEAL WITH THEM.
SO... BECAUSE THIS COUNTRY'S SECTRT CAN'T BE KNOWN OUT-SIDE
THERE ARE PEOPLE WHO REFUSE TO LISTEN AND JUST WANT TO LEAVE THIS COUNTRY, NO MATTER WHAT.

THAT'S OUR JOB, Y'KNOW.
WELL, WE KILLED 'EM.

WH-WHAT DID YOU DO!?

.....
SEVERAL DOZEN... MAYBE.
H-HOW MANY !?
29
ALL THOSE PEOPLE...
SH-SHUNJRŌ-DONO... ORDERED ...


SHUNJIRŌ-
DONO...!

.....
Ugo.

あずみ 20 —血化粧—

ビッグコミックス

ISBN4-09-185060-X

2001年2月1日初版第1刷発行 (検印廃止)
2005年8月5日 第15刷発行

著者 小山ゆう
©Yū Koyama 2001
発行者 笹原博
印刷所 凸版印刷株式会社
Printed in Japan

発行所 (〒101-8001)東京都千代田区一ツ橋二の三の一
振替(00180−1−200) TEL 編集03(3230)5509 販売03(5281)3556 株式会社小学館

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